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FASCIST EXTREMIST ARMED REVOLUTION

By Rodney Thompson
Illustrations by Andy Smith, colors by Michael Atiyeh

INTRODUCTION

The modern world does not wage war the way it used to. The rules have changed, and with them so too have the enemies of freedom. Terrorism is the order of the day, and no country is exempt from its presence. Recognized terrorist organizations fill the headlines of global newspapers, but one organization stands out as the most dangerous and most exotic of the group. The Fascist Extremist Armed Revolution, commonly referred to as FEAR, is an organization not to be taken lightly.

Some governments define FEAR as political activists; others as terrorists, organized criminals, mercenaries, or even as a military-in-exile. The INTERPOL Fusion Task Force lists agents of FEAR in all of its terrorist and organized crime databases as both hostile and extremely dangerous. Every single member of FEAR is red-flagged as "to be captured and brought in immediately," and more radical countries have declared that all identified members of FEAR are to be shot on sight. Regardless of border, nationality, political views, or current enemies and allies, almost every nation in the world recognizes FEAR as a wild-card group that is too effective to be allowed to continue to function. Agents of FEAR usually display the organization's emblem: a ghostly blue skull.

FEAR holds absolutely no allegiances, not to any country, ideal, or even to money. FEAR has only one goal: world conquest. Though for the time being the organization lacks the resources and manpower to begin conquering entire nations, FEAR continues to move throughout the world, coercing nations into war with one another in the hopes of weakening the military might of all countries. Currently, INTERPOL suspects that FEAR is working to destabilize the world's most powerful militaries in order to eliminate the largest threats to their existence.

Though smaller than the armies of most nations, FEAR boasts a sizeable membership with a roster of generals and leaders that sounds like the colorful cast of a television serial. The group is fascist only in that they wish to put everyone under their strict control, and only global domination will suit them. The paramilitary forces of FEAR function as small combat units and rarely engage in open warfare with large-scale armies, though if the time came for the group to seize power it is likely that the well-trained and well-equipped soldiers of FEAR would have little difficulty with anything short of a first-world country's armed forces. For the time being, FEAR contents itself with small-scale terrorism, organized crime, mercenary work, assassinations, and other similar activities.

THE OVERLORD

INTERPOL's most wanted list has changed greatly over the years as targets died or were apprehended, but one name has remained at the top for decades: the Overlord. Known only by his codename and association with FEAR, the Overlord has plagued the free world since the days of the Vietnam War. At one point, the Overlord was little more than a gun-runner suspected of working with Central American communist armies to thwart American ambitions in the region. Over time, his lucrative smuggling career evolved into an illegal arms empire, and he founded FEAR soon afterward. With millions (or possibly billions, if some rumors are to be believed) of dollars in dirty money in private bank accounts around the world, the Overlord has privately funded his war of global domination since the organization began.

The Overlord handles almost every aspect of FEAR's operation. Although he leaves some of the minor details in the hands of his agents and lieutenants, the Overlord is sure to keep a close eye on the various activities of his organization out of paranoia that his underlings might be plotting against him. In this case, he is correct, as his second-in-command has long plotted, and even attempted, to overthrow the Overlord and seize control of the organization for himself. In addition to his meticulous management of FEAR operations, the Overlord personally oversaw the creation and training regimen of his masked phantom troopers, recognizing the need for expendable shock troops when indirect warfare became impractical. Additionally, the Overlord brokers most of the organization's deals with governments and criminal organizations, acting as both commander and liaison whenever possible. The Overlord is not afraid to send his agents on any mission, and has absolutely no scruples whatsoever. Lying, betrayal, and murder

NEW FEAT: TERRIFYING PRESENCE

You are far more than merely frightening, and instill abject terror in opponents that dare to face you.

Prerequisites: Frightful Presence.

Benefit: Whenever you successfully make use of the Frightful Presence feat, the penalty opponents suffer on attack rolls, saves, and skill checks increases to –4.

Normal: When using the Frightful Presence feat, opponents suffer a –2 penalty on attack rolls, saves, and skill checks.

Special: This feat may be selected as part of the Charismatic hero's bonus feat list.

are his favorite pastimes, and the word of the Overlord is as far from trustworthy as one can get.

The Overlord is a paranoid man whose real name and identity are unknown to everyone but himself. In order to protect his identity from the rest of the world, the Overlord wears a special helmet that projects a hologram over his face. The hologram is that of an ethereal skull, animated so as to appear to speak and move just the same as his own face might. The Overlord also wears a distinct set of blue body armor, segmented and overlapping to allow for freedom of movement, though no FEAR emblem adorns his clothing. The Overlord is a huge man, almost brutish in appearance, muscular and towering a head above the next tallest member of FEAR. His size, mysterious appearance, and absolute and utter ruthlessness have earned him respect and the reputation of being the perfect man to lead FEAR to victory.

The Overlord: (Charismatic 9/Soldier 8); CR 17; Medium-size human; HD 9d6+27 plus 8d10+24; hp 126; Mas 16; Init +7 (+1 Dex, +4 Improved Initiative, +2 Improved Reaction); Spd 30 ft.; Defense 28, touch 19, flat-footed 28 (+9 class, +9 armor); BAB +12; Grap +16; Atk +16/+11/+6 melee (1d6+5, unarmed strike), or +15/+10/+5 ranged (2d8+4/19–20, H&K TMP7 SMG); FS 5 ft. by 5 ft.; Reach 5 ft.; SQ coordinate, dazzle, fast-talk, greater inspiration, improved critical (TMP7 SMG), greater weapon focus (TMP7 SMG), weapon specialization (TMP7 SMG); AL FEAR; SV Fort +11, Ref +9, Will +9; AP 14; Rep +9; Wealth +18; Str 18, Dex 12, Con 16, Int 11, Wis 15, Cha 18.

OVERLORD

NIGHTMARE

Occupation: Criminal (bonus class skills: Disable Device, Hide).

Skills: Bluff +20, Demolitions +8, Diplomacy +16, Disable Device +4, Disguise +10, Gather Information +16, Hide +1, Intimidate +24, Knowledge (tactics) +10, Listen +6, Profession (mercenary) +10, Spot +12.

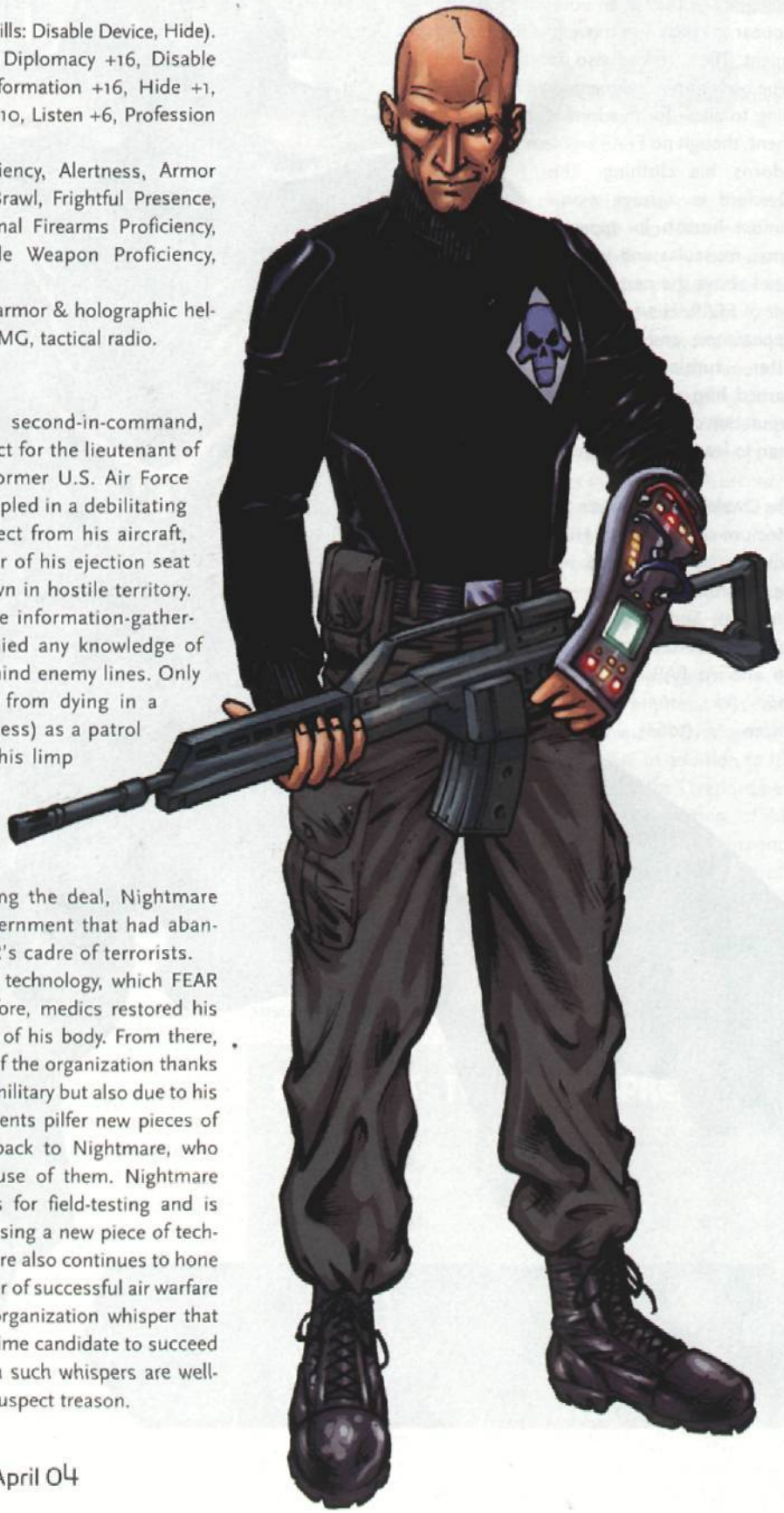
Feats: Advanced Firearms Proficiency, Alertness, Armor Proficiency (heavy, light, medium), Brawl, Frightful Presence, Improved Initiative, Iron Will, Personal Firearms Proficiency, Point Blank Shot, Renown, Simple Weapon Proficiency, Terrifying Presence, Windfall.

Possessions: FEAR Overlord body armor & holographic helmet (forced entry unit), H&K TMP7 SMG, tactical radio.

NIGHTMARE

Recognized universally as FEAR's second-in-command, Nightmare seems an unlikely suspect for the lieutenant of a global terrorist organization. A former U.S. Air Force covert pilot, Nightmare became crippled in a debilitating plane crash. As he attempted to eject from his aircraft, fragments of the jet pierced the rear of his ejection seat and severed his spine. He went down in hostile territory. Since his mission was a clandestine information-gathering operation, the government denied any knowledge of his existence and left him to rot behind enemy lines. Only a stroke of luck saved Nightmare from dying in a prison camp (or even in the wilderness) as a patrol of phantom troopers came across his limp body and brought him back to their base. There, he was given a choice: join FEAR, or be given over to his enemies. With promises of medical attention sweetening the deal, Nightmare chose not to put his faith in a government that had abandoned him and instead joined FEAR's cadre of terrorists.

Utilizing the latest in spine repair technology, which FEAR agents had stolen mere months before, medics restored his ability to feel and use the lower half of his body. From there, Nightmare quickly rose in the ranks of the organization thanks not only to his experience in the U.S. military but also due to his affinity for machines. When FEAR agents pilfer new pieces of technology, they bring their booty back to Nightmare, who determines the best way to make use of them. Nightmare always carries a number of gadgets for field-testing and is unpredictable due to his affinity for using a new piece of technology to alter any situation. Nightmare also continues to hone his piloting skills and has led a number of successful air warfare operations. Other members of the organization whisper that Nightmare's intellect makes him a prime candidate to succeed the Overlord upon his death, though such whispers are well-guarded lest FEAR's ruthless leader suspect treason.



DISC EXPLOSIVES

Nightmare's most popular invention among the rank and file members of FEAR is the disc explosive device, also known as a DED. The DED is a small metal disc that measures roughly four inches in diameter and carries inside it a powerful explosive charge. The flat side of the disc attaches to almost any surface, either through magnetism if the surface is metal or through microscopic barbs if not. Once attached to a target, DEDs can either be detonated by remote or by simply twisting the DED clockwise, which arms a timer depending on how far the disc is turned. These explosives are a favorite of Glacier's because they are small, portable, stable, and can be surreptitiously placed at key structural pressure points with ease and without attracting attention.

Weapon	Damage	Critical	Damage Type	Burst Radius	Reflex DC.	Range Increment	Size	Weight	Purchase DC
Disc Explosive Device	3d6	—	Concussion	10 ft	15	—	Tiny	1 lb.	20

Nightmare is a man in his late thirties with a gaunt face and haunted eyes. A jagged scar runs from one eyebrow over the top of his bald head, the only visible remnant of his life-changing plane crash. On one hand he wears a special computer interface device resembling a chain-link glove with gaps spanned by wires across his palm and fingers. Like most terrorist lieutenants, Nightmare has aspirations to one day take over his organization and lead the group himself, but so far has been unable to stage an effective coup d'etat thanks to the Overlord's intimate knowledge of his injuries. In fact, the only reason the Overlord keeps him around despite his occasional open rebellion is the hope that one day Nightmare will help him construct a doomsday device capable of leveling the playing field between FEAR and the nations of the world.

Nightmare: (Smart 7/Techie 8); CR 15; Medium-size human; HD 7d6 plus 8d6; hp 57; Mas 10; Init +6 (+2 Dex, +4 Improved Initiative); Spd 30 ft; Defense 18, touch 18, flat-footed 16 (+2 Dex, +6 class); BAB +7; Grap +7; Atk +7/+2 melee (1d3, unarmed strike) or +9/+4 ranged (2d8, G36 assault rifle); FS 5 ft. by 5 ft.; Reach 5 ft.; SQ build robot, exploit weakness, extreme machine, jury-rig +4, mastercraft (electronic, mechanical) +1, plan, savant (repair), trick; AL FEAR; SV Fort +4, Ref +6, Will +14; AP 13; Rep +5; Wealth +12; Str 10, Dex 15, Con 10, Int 15, Wis 14, Cha 16.

Occupation: Military (bonus class skills: Navigate, Pilot).

Skills: Bluff +11, Computer Use +16, Craft (electronics) +18, Craft (mechanics) +18, Demolitions +12, Disable Device +9, Drive +8, Forgery +9, Intimidate +10, Investigate +9, Knowledge (technology) +12, Navigate +6, Pilot +11, Profession (mercenary) +8, Repair +20, Research +12, Search +10, Spot +6.

Feats: Aircraft Operation, Builder, Combat Expertise, Defensive Martial Arts, Dodge, Elusive Target, Gearhead, Heroic Surge, Improved Initiative, Iron Will, Personal Firearms Proficiency, Simple Weapons Proficiency, Vehicle Expert.

Possessions: H&K G36 assault rifle, combat jumpsuit, computer interface glove, tactical radio, miscellaneous gadgets.

GLACIER

While most members of FEAR enjoy their position in the organization, at least one prominent member does not. The agent codenamed Glacier is a hardened assassin capable of the coldest acts of murder, but at the same time is an unwilling member of the terrorist organization. Glacier was once a peerless assassin-for-hire who traveled the globe looking for jobs with lucrative paychecks. During an operation in a third-world nation, the Overlord discovered the secret that Glacier had worked so hard to keep. Glacier, the unemotional killer, had a young son with a life-threatening illness back in America. Unfortunately, the only way that he could afford treatment was to earn money as a freelance assassin, money which was sent back to the United States to pay for the expensive procedures needed to keep his son alive. Along came the Overlord, who threatened to sell his secret to Glacier's many enemies, effectively blackmailing the assassin into joining the ranks of FEAR.

Now Glacier pays for his son's treatments with money funneled to him from FEAR's treasury. The Overlord keeps the assassin under his thumb through the threat of withholding the money. Glacier is a reluctant agent who moves throughout the world doing the bidding of his masters in FEAR. Glacier specializes in explosives of all kinds and is particularly good at public assassinations designed to send a message. If it can be detonated, chances are that Glacier knows how to use it as an effective tool in destroying a life. Some of Glacier's most famous assassinations include blowing up the private jet of a former UN Secretary General, the public death of a US Army colonel by collapsing the stage from which he was delivering a speech, and the murder of a wealthy European oil baron via the detonation of one of his own oil tankers. Glacier is very good at what he does, and his work has baffled bomb squads and specialists around the world for decades.

Glacier takes his codename from his demeanor: cold and patient. Glacier refuses to socialize with other members of FEAR and rarely even speaks more than a few words to his own commanders. Glacier is in good shape for a middle-aged man and has a shock of white hair atop his head with a slight widow's peak. He wears a pair of urban camouflage fatigue pants and a black kevlar vest, to which a number of grenades

GLACIER

and explosives are attached. His hands are covered by a pair of gloves bearing the FEAR insignia, along with a belt with the FEAR skull as the belt buckle.

Glacier: (Smart 7/Soldier 6); CR 13; Medium-size human; HD 7d6+2 plus 6d10+2; hp 81; Mas 10; Init +2; Spd 30 ft; Defense 17, touch 17, flat-footed 15 (+2 Dex, +5 class); BAB +7; Grap +8; Atk +8/+3 melee (1d3, unarmed strike), or +9 ranged (2d6, white phosphorous grenade), or +10 ranged (6d6+2, thermite grenade), or +9 ranged (4d6, fragmentation grenade), or +9/+4 ranged (2d8, Colt M4A1); FS 5 ft. by 5 ft.; Reach 5 ft.; SQ exploit weakness, plan, savant (demolitions), tactical aid, trick, weapon focus (thermite grenade), weapon specialization (thermite grenade); AL FEAR; SV Fort +7, Ref +7, Will +10; AP 8; Rep +7; Wealth +7; Str 13, Dex 14, Con 14, Int 15, Wis 15, Cha 10.

Occupation: Criminal (bonus class skills: Disable Device, Hide).

Skills: Balance +8, Computer Use +12, Concentration +11, Demolitions +20, Disable Device +15, Forgery +8, Hide +10, Intimidate +10, Investigate +6, Knowledge (tactics) +9, Listen +9, Profession (assassin) +8, Repair +10, Research +8, Search +8, Spot +10, Survival +8.

Feats: Advanced Firearms Proficiency, Burst Fire, Cautious, Combat Expertise, Combat Reflexes, Focused, Gearhead, Heroic Surge, Iron Will, Personal Firearms Proficiency, Renown, Simple Weapons Proficiency, Track.

Possessions: DED (×10), Fragmentation grenade (×6), Colt M4A1 assault rifle, semtex charge (×4), tactical radio, thermite grenade (×4), white phosphorous grenade (×4).

JESTER

As might be expected of a dangerous criminal organization, not every member of FEAR is entirely sane. Such is the case with Jester, FEAR's foremost gunslinger, sniper, and overall loose cannon. Jester is a former member of the Russian mafia whose penchant for firearms earned her a high rank in the crime syndicate. Unfortunately, her lack of restraint (and the general feeling of unease she instilled in the other members of the mafia) eventually led to her exile and placement on the mob's hit list. Jester was surprised to find out that summary executions of other members of the mafia were not encouraged, even if they did have it coming. Her exile and search for a new home led her to FEAR's ranks, where she not only found a place to continue her previous lifestyle but also a relative amount of safety from the Russians. The price remains on her head, but bounty hunters are no longer as eager to take her as their quarry so long as she remains a prominent member of FEAR.

JESTER

Jester coordinates many of the high-firepower operations undertaken by the organization. She is an active field leader and prefers to be right in the thick of combat. It is here that she is at her most disconcerting; when engaged in firefights and brawls, Jester has a tendency to laugh maniacally as she pumps round after round of ammunition at the enemy. Equally as disturbing is her obvious sadism and relentlessness on the battlefield; Jester frequently hunts down enemy forces to the last man and does not stop her relentless pursuit until she is satisfied that no enemy forces remain alive. Jester takes no prisoners, which is the reason that the Overlord chooses her for missions calling for total extermination of the enemy. In addition to serving as a field general, Jester also assists Glacier from time to time on assassination missions, though her penchant for preemptive aggression makes her unfit for true stealth.

Jester is an attractive woman with green eyes and flame-red hair, belying some western European heritage in her background. She always carries an impressive array of firearms on her person, from pistols to a collapsible sniper rifle, and secrets clips of ammunition in hidden pockets sewn into her garments. On some field missions she wears the standard issue uniform of the phantom trooper, but otherwise she wears a dark blue breastplate (with the FEAR logo etched in black into the armor) custom designed to be form-fitting and sleek, with a pair of black pants covered with overlapping black armor plates. A pair of tattoos lead from the corners of her eyes down her cheek like a pair of fangs.

Jester: (Fast 3/Gunslinger 10); CR 13; Medium-size human; HD 3d8 plus 10d10; hp 78; Mas 11; Init +3; Spd 25 ft; Defense 31, touch 26, flat-footed 28 (+3 Dex, +13 class, +5 armor); BAB +9; Grap +9; Atk +9/+4 melee (1d3, unarmed strike), or +14/+9 ranged (2d6, Beretta 93R), or +12/+7 ranged (2d8, Desert Eagle), or +12/+7 ranged (2d10, H&K SL95D); FS 5 ft. by 5 ft.; Reach 5 ft.; SQ bullseye (Beretta 93R), close combat shot, defensive position, greater weapon focus (Beretta 93R), lightning shot, sharp-shooting; AL FEAR; SV Fort +4, Ref +10, Will +6; AP 13; Rep +4; Wealth +9; Str 10, Dex 16, Con 11, Int 12, Wis 10, Cha 13.

Occupation: Criminal (bonus class skills: Hide, Move Silently).

Skills: Balance +4, Bluff +10, Drive +8, Escape Artist +6, Hide +11, Intimidate +11, Knowledge (streetwise) +6, Move Silently +6, Profession (mercenary) +6, Sleight of Hand +10, Spot +9, Tumble +11.

NEW WEAPONS AND AMMUNITION

Agents of FEAR equip themselves with some of the latest military technology currently available on the world's blackest markets. Statistics for weapons cited in this article are provided below.

Name	Damage	Crit.	Dam. Type	Range Inc.	Rate of Fire	Caliber	Magazine	Size	Weight	Purchase DC	Res.
H&K TMP7	2d8	20	Ballistic	70 ft.	S, A	4.6×30mm	50 box	Large	8 lb.	21	Res (+2)
H&K G36K	2d8	20	Ballistic	70 ft.	S, A	5.56×45mm	30 box	Large	8 lb.	20	Res (+2)
Colt M4A1	2d8	20	Ballistic	70 ft.	S, A	5.56×45mm	30 box	Large	7 lb.	18	Res (+2)
H&K SL95D	2d10	20	Ballistic	100 ft.	Single	7.62×37mm	30 box	Large	10 lb.	22	Lic (+1)
AK-74 SU	2d8	20	Ballistic	70 ft.	S, A	5.45×40mm	30 box	Large	9 lb.	17	Res (+2)

Caliber	Ammo Type	Damage	Purchase DC
4.6×30mm	Ball	2d8	7
5.45×40mm	Ball	2d8	5
5.56×45mm	Ball	2d8	4
7.62×37mm	Ball	2d10	5

Feats: Advanced Firearms Proficiency, Armor Proficiency (light, medium), Burst Fire, Double Tap, Personal Firearms Proficiency, Point Blank Shot, Precise Shot, Quick Draw, Quick Reload, Simple Weapons Proficiency, Strafe.

Possessions: Beretta 93R (×2), combat breastplate, Desert Eagle, H&K SL95D sniper rifle, tactical radio.

PHANTOM TROOPER

Not every member of FEAR can be a leader, and the rank-and-file soldiers of the organization are among the most dedicated and obedient agents in the entire group. Known commonly as phantom troopers, these soldiers serve as the faceless hordes sent to wreak havoc on the group's enemies. Phantom troopers wear solid black commando jumpsuits with load-bearing shoulder harnesses and belts, as well as an array of combat gear draped over their bodies. Shoulder pads bearing the FEAR insignia complete the body portion of the outfit, along with a pair of kneepads designed to lessen the shock of dropping to a more compact firing position. Each phantom trooper has a black mask with an opening for the eyes, which are usually covered by a pair of glare-dampening/night-vision goggles. Additionally, each phantom trooper has the ghostly skull insignia of FEAR emblazoned on his or her chest in a faint shade of blue. Since anonymity is key to the success of the phantoms, each trooper wears a special device taped to their throats that alters their voices and gives them a deep and frightening sound.

Phantom Trooper: (Tough 3); CR 3; Medium-size human; HD 3d10+1; hp 25; Mas 13; Init +1; Spd 30 ft; Defense 13, touch 13, flat-footed 12 (+1 Dex, +2 class); BAB +2; Grap +3; Atk +3 melee (1d3+1, unarmed strike), or +3 ranged (2d8, AK-74 SU) or +3 ranged (4d6, fragmentation grenade); FS 5 ft. by 5 ft.; Reach 5 ft.; SQ Damage Reduction 2/—; AL FEAR; SV Fort +3, Ref +2, Will +1; AP 3; Rep +1; Wealth +6; Str 12, Dex 12, Con 13, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 10.

Occupation: Military (bonus class skills: Demolitions, Move Silently).

Skills: Concentration +2, Demolitions +4, Intimidate +2, Move Silently +5, Profession (mercenary) +2, Spot +4.

Feats: Advanced Firearms Proficiency, Double Tap, Far Shot, Personal Firearms Proficiency, Point Blank Shot, Simple Weapons Proficiency.

Possessions: AK-74 SU assault rifle, combat jumpsuit, fragmentation grenade (×6), night-vision goggles, tactical radio. ●

Rodney Thompson is the author of the Star Wars Hero's Guide and a member of AEG's Spycraft/Shadowforce Archer Design Team.

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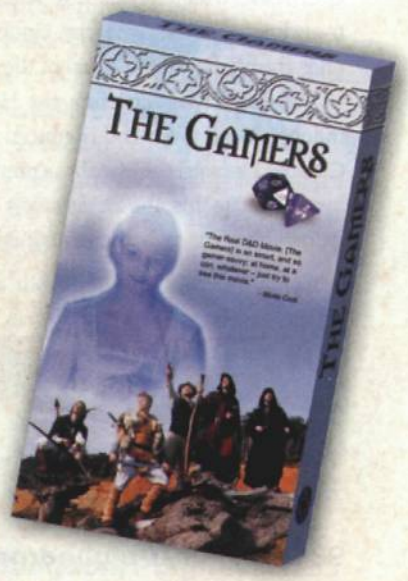

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HARDBY: CITY OF THE SCORNED

By Paul Looby

Lying on the northern shores of Woolly Bay, the port of Hardby was once a free city with a proud history longer even than that of its more illustrious northern neighbor, the city of Greyhawk. Uniquely, Hardby was ruled by women, collectively known as the Gynarchy. Under their leadership the city once counted itself the equal of the Gem of the Flanaess.

The Greyhawk Wars brought Hardby's long tradition of independence to an end. Reduced to a vassal of Greyhawk City, the Despotrix of Hardby is now little more than a figurehead. Despite this, the long shadow that Greyhawk casts over its neighbor conceals the machinations of many who would see the Free City humbled. The shame and anger of its enslavement have made Hardby a nexus for Greyhawk's foes.

A busy sea port, Hardby is the gateway between the central Flanaess and the realms of the south. News of the war in Onnwal, whispers of the fabulous wealth of the new overking of Ahlissa, and tall tales of the strange, sweltering jungles of Hepmonaland are all to be found in the city's taverns. Vessels bound for these destinations and many others throng the harbor. Adventurers intent on exploring the rugged and dangerous southern Abbor-Alz or the Bright Desert beyond often make Hardby their base. Some

return with fabulous wealth or tales of Rary the Traitor. Most do not return at all.

Within the walls of Hardby itself, plots multiply among the disparate factions vying for control of the city. The despotrix is dying, and already the struggle to succeed her rages among the gynarchs. Even as they bicker, sinister foreign powers seek to exploit the city's internal divisions to their own ends. Hardby yearns to free itself from Greyhawk's yoke, but in doing so it may replace one set of shackles with another.

The Gynarchy

The Suel mage Ena Norbe founded the Gynarchy of Hardby. A follower of Wee Jas, Norbe grew up hearing tales of the folly of the men who caused the fall of the Suel Imperium. Thus when she founded her own settlement, she was determined that it would never suffer from the rash foolishness and brutal violence that characterized the rule of men. Norbe therefore decreed that only women would be allowed to rule Hardby.

The first gynarch bore six daughters who, like their mother, became puissant mages. From them are descended the Six Great Families of Hardby that serve as the foundation of the gynarchy to this day. In the early centuries, the eldest woman among the Six Families became gynarch upon the death of her predecessor. While this meant that the gynarchs' reigns were often short, it also ensured that their rule was tempered with the wisdom of age.

Between 254 and 351 CY, the title of gynarch was hereditary within the family of Yragerne alone. As a result, in 339 CY, Zagig Yragerne became Hardby's only Despot in his role as the Landgraf of Selintan. He afterward renounced the title, however, and the gynarchs of the five remaining Families elected one of their number to serve as Supreme Gynarch and Despotrix until her death, a system that persists to this day.

The gynarchs are drawn from five of the six original Families (Norbelos, Gerneskir, Jonnosh, Havelos, and Maynem) and a sixth family, Longland, elevated to replace the Yragerne when Zagig vanished in 421 CY, leaving no issue. There are never more than forty gynarchs at one time. Each Family nominates six gynarchs, while the reigning despotrix chooses a further three gynarchs as her personal advisors. Each gynarch in turn chooses a didatrix from the ranks of the Six Families, to act as her personal secretary, annalist, and herald. Most gynarchs serve time as didatrixes before gaining promotion.

Although the Gynarchy has had no official powers since the Merchants' Coup of 517 CY, they have expressed their will in more subtle ways. When the Merchants' Alliance took power, their leaders quickly found wives among the Six Families. Soon, the despotrix found that her wishes would, in no time at all, become the Trade Council's policy, often without even mentioning it to them directly. The pattern has repeated itself since Greyhawk took control of Hardby, and has earned the despotrix widespread respect and deference among the Hardby Marines and Greyhawk

Mountaineers, much to the alarm of the Directing Oligarchy of Greyhawk City.

It is an open secret that Despotrix Ilena is dying. Already, prospective successors are maneuvering for advantage. Chief amongst these is Gynarch Deirdre Longland, a doughty warrior in days past and, since the Greyhawk Wars, a champion of the church of Mayaheine. Deirdre holds the title of Justicar of Hardby, acting as the head of the city judiciary. Although she has the advantage of age, title, and experience, she is hampered by her lack of magical ability. Despotrixes past have usually been wizards.

Her main rival is Gynarch Aleeta Norbelos, who is not only a wizard and a judge, but the granddaughter of Despotrix Ilena. Though she is only 24, the young gynarch is popular for her staunchly anti-Greyhawk stance. Deirdre, on the other hand, has spoken of the need for cooperation between Hardby and Greyhawk against the twin threats of Turrosh Mak and Rary the Traitor.

The struggle between the two has divided the Gynarchy and led some to propose a compromise candidate in the form of **Bridara Norbelos of Hardfield** (N female human Wiz9), the eldest of the gynarchs. This would be the ideal solution, if Bridara had not spent her life assiduously avoiding politics. Although the matter is moot while Ilena yet lives, everyone in Hardby knows that the issue will be decided sooner rather than later.

The Hardby Merchants' Alliance

When the Pomarj fell to humanoid hordes, many refugees fled to the safety of Hardby. The mainly male leaders of the refugees found themselves excluded from governance, and worse still, belittled by Hardby's famously independent-minded women. Unwilling to tolerate this state of affairs, the refugees took control of the docks and the militia. Founding the Hardby Merchants' Alliance, they seized power in a bloodless coup. Much to the Alliance's surprise, the despotrix quietly accepted her deposal. Little were the merchants to know that the Gynarchy would have the last laugh.

The Alliance created the Trade Council, consisting of six merchants, six "rivermen" (dockers, pilots or military officers, and one judge), to rule Hardby. Half of the rivermen and merchants are elected every three years, while every five years the Watch and staff of the Law Courts nominate the judge, usually a member of the Gynarchy.

Where once the Trade Council had few official constraints on its powers (so long as it did what the despotrix wished), its remit is now greatly diminished. Since Greyhawk took control of Hardby, the rivermen councillors have been military officers loyal to the Directing Oligarchy. The Council is subordinate to the Military Governor and confined to discussion of strictly commercial matters. Even taxation is dictated from Greyhawk. A major cause for grievance is the waiver on tariffs given to members of the Greyhawk Union of Merchants and Traders shipping their cargoes through Hardby, a boon not extended to members of the Alliance. This has caused no small degree of resentment among Hardby's mercantile class.

The leader of the Alliance is **Perav Hulvir** (LN male human Exp8). A former longshoreman made good, Perav

THE CITY OF HARDBY

♛ **Hardby (small city):** Conventional; AL: LN; 15,000 gp; Assets: 3,825,000 gp; Population 5,100; Mixed (human 72%, half-orc 22%, halfling 2%, dwarf 1%, gnome 1%, half-elf 1%, elf 1%).

Authority Figures: Ilena Norbelos (NG female human Wiz13), Despotrix of Hardby; Wilbrem Carister (LN male human Ftr9), Military Governor of Hardby and Commander of the Hardby Marines; Retep Mandel (LE male human Rog5/Asn4), Chief Secretary to the Military Governor.

Important Characters: Deirdre Longland (LG female human Ftr8/Cav4), Gynarch and Justicar of Hardby; Aleeta Norbelos (NE female human Wiz7), Gynarch of Hardby and Judge of the Law Courts; Javka Gerneskir (NG female human Rog3/Clr3—Lirr), Didatrix to Despotrix Ilena; Mirlan Rinshand (LN male human Rog10), Factor of the Royal Guild of Merchants of Aerdy.

Temples: Ehlonna (forests, woodlands), Joramy (fire, volcanoes, wrath), Lirr (literature, art), Mayaheine (protection, justice, valor), Myrhiss (love, beauty), Norebo (luck, gambling), Osprem (sea voyages, sailors), Pelor (sun, light, healing, protection), Procan (seas, navigation), St. Cuthbert (common sense, wisdom, discipline), Wee Jas (magic, death, vanity), Xerbo (seaborne trade), Zilchus (power, money).

A Chronology of Hardby

5237 SD (–278 CY): The Suel mage Ena Norbe and her followers found Norbe Harbor. After plague and storms decimate the settlers, the town is renamed Hard Bay (later Hardby). Norbe declares herself Gynarch and decrees that only women will rule thereafter.

33 CY: Maro, daughter of Gynarch Ymara, marries Ganz, the son of Maret Nial, Landgraf of Selintan, sealing a pact of alliance between the two towns. Hardby becomes a palatine fief of the Landstadt of Selintan and the Great Kingdom.

205 CY—220 CY: Gynarch Jik Jonnosh comes to power, conquering and burning seven pirate towns north of Safeton along the Wild Coast. Under her rule, Hardby claims all lands within ten leagues of the north shore of Woolly Bay and reaches the zenith of its power.

is a broad, bullish man who makes up in raw cunning for what he lacks in education. Under his direction, the Alliance has begun consolidating Hardby's guilds with the message that though unity there is strength to overcome the current difficulties. Perav has recently become a drinking partner of Mirlan Rinshand, the local factor for the Royal Guild of Merchants of Aerdy. The only obvious outcome of these meetings has been a Royal Guild contract for several Alliance merchants to carry Ahlissan cargoes from Prymp to Hardby, much to the joy of the hard-pressed local traders.

Military

The Military Governor of Hardby is **Wilbrem Carister** (LN male human Ftr9), the commander of the Hardby Marines. Formerly a member of the Trade Council, Carister sold out his fellow councillors for command of the Marines and, less importantly in his view, the title of Military Governor. As such, he has the power to issue decrees on matters of security and other areas. Being a soldier rather than a ruler, however, he governs with a light touch, leaving most of the actual administration to his chief secretary, **Retep Mandel** (LE male human Rog5/Asn4).

Mandel is Hardby's Governor in all but name. A trusted lieutenant of Vesparian Lafanel, director of Greyhawk's infamous Assassin's Guild, his remit is to uncover and eliminate any threats to the Directing Oligarchy's dominance in Hardby. Mandel has a network of spies and informers monitoring both the Gynarchy and the Merchants' Alliance. He is also trying to increase the influence of the Greyhawk Thieves' Guild among the local criminal fraternity. Since Mandel's arrival, several vociferous opponents of Greyhawk have either recanted their opinions or simply vanished. Unsurprisingly, he is

254 CY: At the invitation of Gynarch Varasia Yragerne, Aerdi garrisons are stationed in Hardby. With the support of the Aerdi, Varasia makes the title of Gynarch hereditary within the Family of Yragerne.

277 CY: Aerdi troops are withdrawn. Zagig Yragerne is born in Hardby.

339 CY: Gynarch Eileme Yragerne dies. Her son, Zagig, becomes Landgraf of Selintan, and Despot of Hardby.

351 CY: Zagig relinquishes the title of Despot. Annarra Havelos is elected Supreme Gynarch and Despotrix of Hardby by her fellow gynarchs.

498 CY: The Landstadt of Selintan is abolished, restoring Hardby's full autonomy.

despised and feared in equal measure by both the Gynarchy and the Alliance.

The Hardby Marines protect the city from pirates and orc sea raiders from the Pomarj. The fleet consists of six war galleys, one of which is stationed continually at both Hardby and Safeton, with the other four prowling the waters between. There is always a garrison of approximately 80 marines present in Hardby. The morale of the Marines is excellent and they are hardy fighters, skilled with cutlass, club, knife and light crossbow. A wizard and a cleric of either Pelor or St. Cuthbert also support each war galley while on patrol.

The mainstay of the garrison is 300 men from the Greyhawk Mountaineers. As well as garrisoning the city, they patrol the western foothills of the Abbor-Alz. Hardby's militia makes up the balance of the garrison, numbering 150 infantry and 100 cavalry. The infantry ward the gates and walls of the city, while cavalry patrols maintain order in the outlying villages and manors. Day to day law and order in the burgh is maintained by the City Watch, based in Northend and answerable to the Justicar of Hardby. The Watch are scrupulous in their maintenance of the laws of the city and corruption is surprisingly rare.

Although the Marines are fiercely loyal to their commander Wilbrem Carister and all of the Greyhawk men profess their love of their home city, the despotrix and the Gynarchy are held in high esteem among Hardby's garrison. The Militia and Watch are even more loyal to the despotrix. The Directing Oligarchy has urged Carister to do more to rectify the divided loyalties of his men, but—typically—the military governor has ignored such calls in favor of orc-slaying on the high seas.

Districts

Hardby lies on the eastern shore of Hard Bay, an inlet of Woolly Bay. The dark-blue waters of the harbor are deep enough for ocean-going vessels to navigate, while the seacliffs on its southern and western shores ensure a sheltered anchorage. A pair of giant statues depicting two brawling men dominates the entrance to the harbor. The statues, a heavyset, balding man in middle age and a younger, taller man, are a reminder of the violent and foolish nature of men and a symbol of the enlightened rule of the Gynarchy.

The oldest portion of the city lies between the bay and the Great Wall, a 20-foot-high stone structure strengthened by a series of square-built watchtowers. The district of Northend, also known as High Chapel, houses most of Hardby's administrative and military buildings. Hardby's waterfront bristles with wharves, piers, and jetties. Along its length lies the Dock District, a chaotic assembly of inns, taverns, and flophouses. Between the docks and the Great Wall lies Fishtown, home to myriad maritime crafts, industries, and warehouses. The portion of Hardby without the Great Wall is divided between the mercantile Trade Town and the residential Ebbfields, and is girdled by a ditch and wooden palisade.

Northend (High Chapel)

Standing on the site of Ena Norbe's original stockade, Northend is a warren of official buildings, including the Palace of the Gynarchs, the City Watch House, and the Law Courts. Hardby's garrison is largely billeted here also, with the barracks for the Hardby Marines, Greyhawk Mountaineers, and Hardby Militia all crammed into the crowded district.

Palace of the Gynarchs: Richly adorned and built in the circular, domed Suloise Classical style, the Palace of the Gynarchs stands in the center of Northend. Formerly the seat of power of the Despotrix, the palace has become a monument to Hardby's lost independence. Though Wilbrem Carister rules from the Arsenal, the granite and marble Palace still plays host to meetings of the Gynarchy. These take place in the great echoing Chamber of the First Mother, which houses the *Throne of Wood*, a minor artifact devoted to Ehlonna and the traditional seat of the despotrixes of Hardby. The Trade Council also meets in the Palace, though it has for many decades convened in an antechamber, leaving the Chamber of the First Mother as the sole domain of the gynarchs.

DM's Notes: The Gynarchy meets on the middle day of each festival week, though little other than ceremonial matters are discussed at these sessions. The real business goes on behind closed doors at secret conclaves out of sight of the agents of the Merchants' Alliance and Retep Mandel that infest the old Palace. The future of the city and resistance to the rule of Greyhawk are regularly discussed.

517 CY: The Merchants' Coup—the Hardby Merchants' Alliance subverts the militia and dockers and seizes power. The Trade Council of the Alliance becomes the ruling body of Hardby, retaining the despotrix as a figurehead.

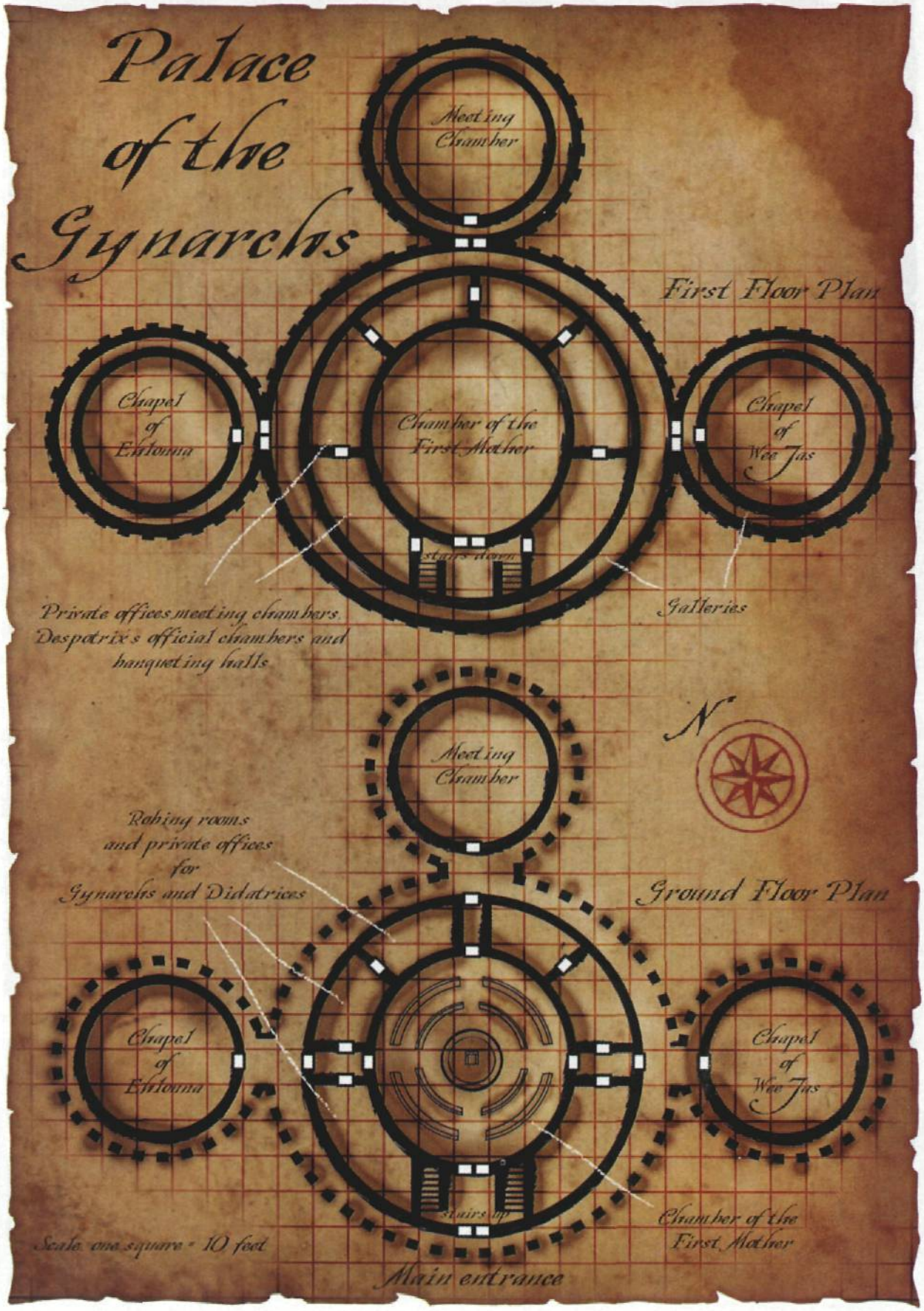
566 CY: Ilena Norbelos is elected as Despotrix of Hardby.

582 CY: After raids by savage humanoids from the Abbor-Alz, Greyhawk Mountaineers are garrisoned in Hardby. Wilbrem Carrister betrays the Trade Council into the hands of the Directing Oligarchy of Greyhawk City, in return for command of the Hardby Marines and the title of Military Governor of Hardby.

586 CY: Despotrix Ilena takes part in the Striking of the *Crook of Rao* and falls ill soon thereafter.

594 CY: The current year.

The City of Harby
To Orz
Lighthouse
The Ebbfields
Tradetown
Lighthouse
Palisade
The Great Wall
Fishtown
Dark District
River Road
Northend
Hard Bay
N
Breakwater
Statues
Lighthouse
1. Palace of the Gynarchs
2. The High Chapel
3. The Law Courts and Watch Barracks
4. The Arsenal
5. Sign of the Tarnished Idol
6. The Pilot's Office
7. The Spotted Cow Inn
8. Danigar's Pen
9. The Great Cranes
10. The Shipwrights Guildhall
11. The Bonded Barrel Ghetto
12. Taremann Norne Warehouses
13. Shop of Roban Lanerell
14. Office of the Royal Guild of Merchants of Aerdy
15. Mistress of the Coach Inn
16. Berei's Bounty
17. Order of the Throne of Wood Chapterhouse
18. Redoubt of the Shield Maiden
19. Rotanna's Menagerie
20. Temple of Osprem
21. Temple of Xerbo
22. Temple of Procan
23. Temple of Zilchus
24. Temple of St. Cuthbert
25. Temple of Lirr
26. Temple of Myrhiss
27. Temple of Norebo
28. Temple of Joramy
29. The Phoenix
30. Temple of Zodal


Palace of the Gynarchs
First Floor Plan
Meeting Chamber
Chapel of Ehlonna
Chamber of the First Mother
Chapel of Wee Jas
stairs down
Private offices meeting chambers Despatrix's official chambers and banqueting halls
Galleries
N
Meeting Chamber
Ground Floor Plan
Ruling rooms and private offices for Gynarchs and Didatrices
Chapel of Ehlonna
Chapel of Wee Jas
stairs up
Chamber of the First Mother
Scale: one square = 10 feet
Main entrance

Mandel would dearly love to infiltrate and spy upon such meetings, but he has been utterly without success in cultivating spies among the Gynarchy.

The High Chapel: The Temple of Pelor in Hardby is one of the oldest religious structures in the city. Its golden dome soars high over the rooftops of Northend, giving the temple the name it also lends to the district as a whole. The High Priestess is **Mother Storanna** (NG female human Clr9—Pelor), a woman in her late sixties, who has resided in the city for forty years and overseen the temple for the last fifteen. Under Mother Storanna's direction, the priests distribute healing, food, and alms to the poor of the city. Unusually, the temple enjoys the patronage of all factions in Hardby, largely due to Storanna's strenuous efforts to avoid involvement in the city's politics. Many of the clergy are female, though the church does not discriminate on grounds of gender.

DM's Notes: Pelor's clergy within Hardby are split between older priests, who favor the charitable, gentle doctrines of the Sun Father, and younger priests, who favor Pelor's more martial aspect. Mother Storanna is firmly in the camp of the old guard, seeking to keep the church out of the intrigues that now multiply in the city. However, her deputy, **Noranae Longland** (LG female human Clr7—Pelor), is a fervent proponent of the new doctrines. Like her cousin, Deirdre, she has been a vociferous champion of the burgeoning church of Mayaheine. As a native of the city, Noranae lacks the detachment of her superior and has already declared her support for her cousin's bid for the *Throne of Wood*.

The Law Courts and Watch Barracks: Standing opposite the Palace of the Gynarchs, the Law Courts and Watch Barracks are housed in a single massive edifice. Despite attempts by the Directing Oligarchy to impose Greyhawk's legal code upon the city, the Justicar has fiercely defended Hardby's own code of laws, formulated in its original form by Ena Norbe herself. The Sundries Court deals with petty misdemeanors and disputes, while the High Court deals with serious crimes. The Judiciary is exclusively female, and many judges are also members of the Gynarchy. Wizards and priests (also predominantly female) are employed in all but the most minor cases to determine the veracity of testimony and evidence.

Captain Kateran (LN male human Ftr6), a native of the city, commands the Watch. Kateran is a stern man who, while being loyal to the Gynarchy, fulfils his duty to the Military Governor to the best of his ability. The Law Courts also house a small temple to Wee Jas, who has been worshiped in Hardby since the city's foundation. The Stern Lady has a considerable following among members of the Judiciary.

DM's Notes: Minor crimes, such as theft, vandalism, and breach of contract are punished by sizeable fines (up to 75% of the convict's worth), confiscation of goods of equal value to the stolen property, or public service with the Militia (one day of service/10 gp value). Brawling, provided there are no fatalities, is punished with a night in prison and, in some cases, a small fine (10% of the convict's worth). While it is permitted to bear weapons within the city, drawing them can result in a heavy fine and imprisonment. Serious crimes, such as murder, manslaughter, and arson are punished by payment of a wergild (character level of the convict +1 × 100 gp), forfeiture of property, indentured servitude, or beheading. Violence against women is severely punished, with the penalty for rape being public emasculation followed by burial to the neck below the high water mark on a nearby beach, aptly named Ravishers' End.

The Arsenal: The Arsenal houses the garrison of the Greyhawk Mountaineers and the Militia. Originally built to house only the Militia, the walled compound has expanded to fill an entire city block. The Arsenal stands on the waterfront, close to the Great Wall and overlooking a small naval dock, where at least one Marine galley is always moored. The dock can accommodate the entire fleet, if need be, with facilities for minor repairs and refitting. Wilbrem Carister at least nominally rules Hardby from his spartan offices in the Arsenal. Day to day governance, however, is in the hands of Retep Mandel. Mandel is as unpopular with the Marines as he is elsewhere in Hardby. His orders are followed, however, albeit reluctantly at times.

DM's Notes: Much to Mandel's delight, Carister spends much of his time either on the high seas or planning his next patrol. This leaves Mandel almost complete freedom to act to secure Greyhawk's interests in Hardby. Carister is no fool, however, and has an agent in the form of **Galvin Solgred** (N male human Rog5), one of Mandel's aides, to make sure that Greyhawk's interests coincide with his own.

Rotanna's Menagerie: Tucked away down a back street close to the walls is a small menagerie owned and maintained by **Rotanna Maynem** (NG female human Ari5), one of the Gynarchs of the city. A devotee of Ehlonna, Rotanna has dedicated her life to the collection of animals and beasts of all forms, mundane and exotic. Her townhouse and its courtyard are crammed with cages and pools to house her not unsubstantial collection. Rotanna is in contact with the eccentric Lord Henway of Greyhawk City and has in the past exchanged some of her more exotic specimens for items from his collection.

DM's Notes: Rotanna is wealthy enough to occasionally hire intrepid souls to capture creatures, usually from the Abbor-Alz, Bright Desert, Gnarly, and Suss Forests. She pays well for what is dangerous work. Slaying mon-

The Highchapel District

sters is one thing. Bringing them (and oneself) back alive is another.

Dock District

A broad, cobbled quay runs the length of the waterfront, which is usually forested with the masts of merchantmen of many nations. The cornerstone of Hardby's economy has been the transit trade in goods between the states around the shores of Relmor Bay and the Azure Sea and the lands of the central Flanaess. Though the Scarlet Brotherhood's blockade of the Strait of Gearnat has curtailed trade with Keoland and the Iron League, the presence of the Royal Guild of Merchants of Aerdy is looked upon as a good omen for renewed trade with Ahlissa.

A warren of boisterous sailor's taverns, inns, hostels, and other less reputable premises sprawls along the quay. The narrow streets and fetid back-alleys are dangerous after dark, and Watch patrols are frequent. Drunken brawls are common here, and the district is a hive of criminality.

The Dock District is also home to many of Hardby's half-orcs. Numbering about a thousand, many have lived in Hardby for generations—with most being of Pomarji descent. Consequently, they are more readily trusted and better treated in Hardby than their kin in Safeton, Narwell, or even Greyhawk City.

Sign of the Tarnished Idol: The Sign of the Tarnished Idol is a seedy, run-down keg-house on a back alley close to the waterfront. From the rotting straw on the floor to the makeshift tables, the place is indistinguishable from a score of other dives along the docks, except in one respect. Each midnight, **Rughra** (CE female half-orc Clr5—Camazotz), the uncouth half-orc woman who runs the place, makes all customers pay homage to a tarnished green idol set above what passes for a bar. Most customers, used to the "Midnight Service," pay it no mind so long as the ale keeps flowing. Last winter, however, a well-travelled Keolander took one look at the bat-shaped idol before fleeing the tavern in terror. His bloodless body was found two days later, high in the branches of a tree a league outside the city.

DM's Notes: The idol is devoted to Camazotz, the chaotic evil lesser bat-god of the Olman Underworld (*Domains:* chaos, evil, death, plant). Rughra has become a devotee of "Zotz" (as she calls him) and has been granted divine spells by him. It was she who dealt with the Keolander, summoning a servitor of her master to prevent him from revealing her secret. Unfortunately for Rughra, however, the man, Aherlos of Gradsul, was a Royal Explorer. His mysterious death has piqued the curiosity of his fellows in the Keoish Royal Explorer's Society.

The Pilots' Office: The lighthouse at the southern end of the docks serves as a jail for the watch, a garrison point for the militia, and the headquarters of the Pilots' Office. While the watch and the Pilots' Office share the tower itself, the militia are billeted in an adjoining barracks. The Pilots' Office not only provides pilots to guide ships into port but also inspects and applies tariffs to cargoes landed at the port. Members of the organization also hire themselves out as river pilots, helping low-keeled boats avoid the dangerous shoals of the Selintan on the journey north to Greyhawk. Although these dour and serious bureaucrats remain neutral in political matters, they exert a quiet and extensive influence in the city. The current chief pilot is a half-orc named **Corvel Yellowtusk** (LN male half-orc Exp6).

DM's Notes: The Watch cells are in the somewhat dank basement of the lighthouse and are used to hold prisoners before trial. A score of militia are posted here, manning a number of ballistae and a light catapult mounted on the roof of the barracks. The chief pilot is an efficient and honest man (though he has a fatal weakness for dwarf spirits), who studiously avoids being drawn into "political matters." He works with equal diligence, however, to maintain the power and influence of the Pilots' Office in the city. Furthermore, under his leadership, half-orcs can find easy employ with the pilots, provided they are competent and honest.

The Great Cranes: These three enormous cranes are the work of members of the Khaladuur Clan of Greysmere and the magic of several gynarchs. Built in 588 CY, these ingenious constructions allow for the rapid loading and unloading of cargo. Although they have proven popular among merchants and ship's masters, the Union of Longshoremen has denounced the cranes, saying that they are putting its members out of work.

DM's Notes: Thus far the Union's actions have been confined to protests to the Trade Council and the Pilot's Office. However, their pleas have fallen on deaf ears and now there are angry rumblings within the Union about taking more direct action against the "curse of the cranes."

The Spotted Cow Inn: This hostelry is well known in the Dock District and the city as a whole as one of the best inns in Hardby. Standing on the waterfront at the south end of the docks and conspicuous for its bovine-shaped cowskin sign, the inn is always packed to the gunwales with sailors, longshoremen, fishermen, and tanners from Fish Town. Inside, however, the place is indistinguishable from a hundred other harbor-side inns. The new owner, **Oremal Thelk** (NG male human Exp4), cannot figure out the cause of his success, but is not complaining. Thelk is only the latest in a string of proprietors, few of whom remain more than two years before selling up, despite the inn's clear profitability.

DM's Notes: Unknown to Thelk and indeed many of the previous owners, the Spotted Cow was built on the site of an old shrine to Ralishaz, the god of chance, ill luck, misfortune, and insanity. The shrine was burnt to the ground, along with the priest who tended it, more than a century and a half ago after being struck by lightning in a freak storm. The Spotted Cow was built on the site and has prospered since its opening. The same cannot be said for its

This feat first appeared in *Forgotten Realms: Lords of Darkness*, and has been included here for ease of reference.

Tattoo Magic [Item Creation]
You can create tattoos that store spells.

Prerequisite: Craft (calligraphy) or Craft (painting) skill, spellcaster level 3rd+.

Benefit: You can create single-use magic tattoos.

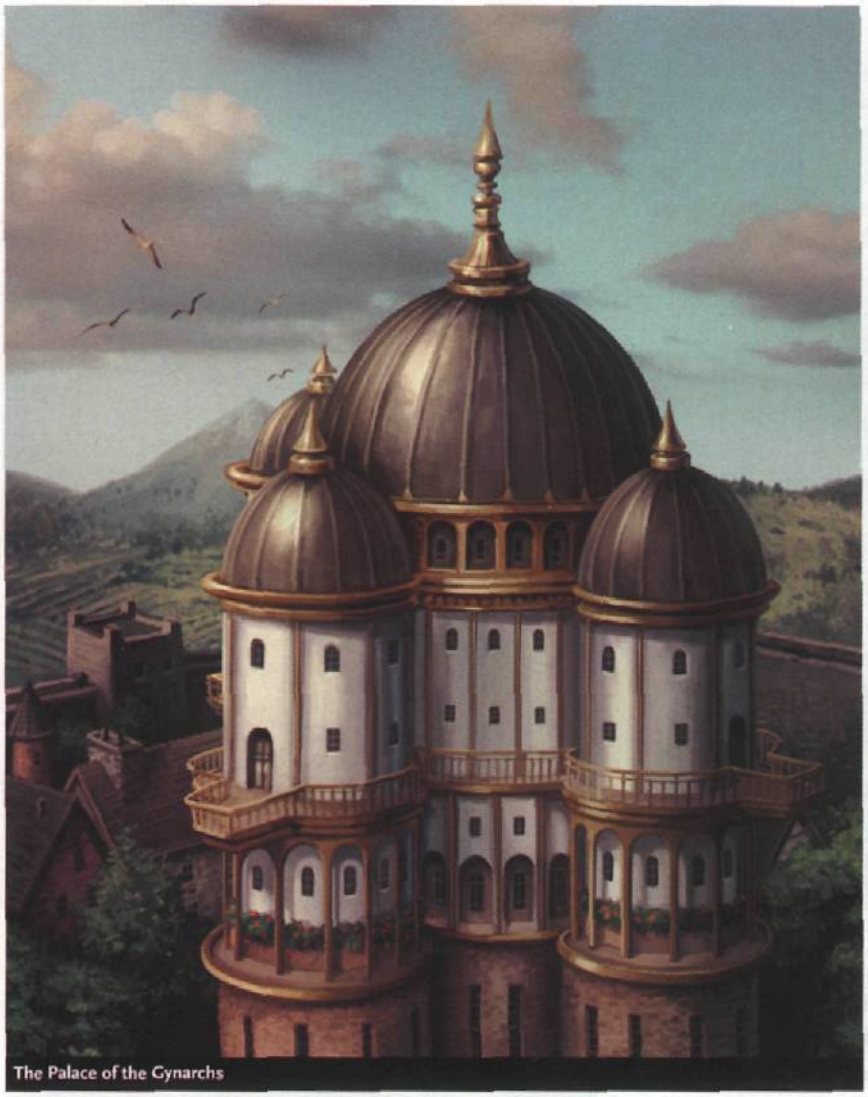
You can create a tattoo of any spell of 3rd level or lower that you know and that targets a creature or creatures. Creating a tattoo takes 1 hour, and it must be inked onto a creature with a corporeal body. When you create a tattoo, you set the caster level. The caster level must be sufficient to cast the spell in question and no higher than your own level. The base price of a tattoo is its spell level × its caster level × 50 gp. To create a tattoo, you must spend 1/25 of this base price in XP and use up raw materials costing half this base price.

When you create a tattoo, you make any choices that you would normally make when casting the spell. The bearer of the tattoo is the only one who can activate it and is always the target of the spell. Activating a tattoo requires the creature to touch the tattoo with either hand (the hand does not need to be empty). Activating a tattoo is a standard action that does not draw an attack of opportunity.

Any tattoo that stores a spell with a costly material component or an XP cost also carries a commensurate cost. In addition to the costs derived from the base price, you must expend the material component or pay the XP when creating the tattoo.

Normally a magic tattoo uses a magic item space on the creature's body. For example, a creature with a tattoo on one of its hands could not gain the benefits from a magic glove on that hand. Likewise, a creature with a magic tattoo on its back does not receive the benefits of a magic cloak, cape, or mantle. In effect, the magic tattoo is always the first item "worn" on that part of the body, negating the effects of all other items. A tattoo can be created that does not use a magic item space, but the base price of such a tattoo is double the normal value.

A magic tattoo can be erased with an *erase* spell as if it were magic writing. Failing to erase the tattoo does not activate it.



The Palace of the Gynarchs

owners who, without exception, have suffered a catalogue of misfortunes. While most have quickly sold up and moved on, a few have tried to tough out their bad luck only to go insane, raving about being haunted by a ghostly figure in smoldering robes.

Danigar's Pen: One of the most popular tattoo-shops on the Hardby Docks, Danigar's Pen is run by young wizard of the same name. **Danigar** (N male half-elf Wiz7) is a former apprentice to **Oscar Longland** (LG male human Wiz12), brother of Justicar Deirdre Longland. After his master was blinded and maimed at the Siege of Safeton, Danigar was forced to fend more and more for himself, hence the tattoo-shop. Danigar's Pen offers two services that his competitors cannot. The first is *erase* spells to remove the names of old sweethearts and mistakes made when Danigar is in his cups—not a rare occurrence. The second is magical tattoos that bestow good fortune upon the bearer. Danigar's new wife, an Olman woman the wizard returned with from an expedition to the Amedio Jungle in early 593 CY, pens these. Danigar's assistant is a very fat halfling called **Gormadoc** (N male halfling Rog9), a regular fixture in many of Hardby's eating establishments.

DM's Notes: Gormadoc is an agent of the Slavelords of the Pomarj, passing information about threats to his masters and on occasion arranging for those showing too much interest in the Slavelords' activities to meet with untimely ends, usually in arranged brawls. Gormadoc has grown greedy. Having wheedled his way into the local "branch" of the Greyhawk's Thieves' Guild, he has begun the dangerous game of playing the Guild off against the Slavelords, passing just enough information about one to the other to make himself a valued (and well-paid) member of both.

In his spare time, Danigar is researching the field of magical tattoos further and has recently taken an interest in the ritual markings of the Flan, both recent and ancient. Danigar's wife, **Hlozapatan** (CN female human Adp10), can indeed craft magic tattoos, which bestow different magical abilities depending on the design of the tattoo as described in the "Tattoo Magic" sidebar.

Fish Town

This district of the old town stretches along the Great Wall. Large swaths of Fish Town are given over to huge warehouses—easily enough to accommodate the volume of goods passing through the port. The area is crammed with fish and meat salters and packers, boat-wrights, net makers, rope makers, and fishermen. As a result, it reeks of fish and is populated by hordes of cats and seagulls. Cats are considered lucky here, and to harm one is to incite the ire of the locals.

Shipwright's Guildhall: The Shipwright's Guildhall is an exquisitely crafted wooden structure built, like many of the Guild's vessels, from the finest Gnarley oak. The guildmaster is **Harvan Lhoral** (N male human Exp9), a local man and master shipwright. The guild's members have the monopoly on all shipbuilding, large and small, in the city and its hinterlands. Thus, they have no small measure of power

over Hardby's economy. The city's shipwrights are known for their quality work, and they attract contracts from as far away as Greyhawk City and even Dyvers.

DM's Notes: While the guildmaster used to hold a practically permanent position on the Trade Council, Harvan has been displaced by the Grayhavian soldiers on the Council. The Guildmaster has taken this as a personal slight and is a staunch, if discrete, opponent of Greyhawk's rule in Hardby. At his direction, the Guild is moving its main yards from Fishtown to Arok's Landing, hoping to make the village a stronghold for the guild and the Merchants' Alliance. Once in a position of strength, Harvan hopes to dictate terms to the Directing Oligarchy by refusing to build or repair ships for vessels not affiliated with the Merchants' Alliance. This embargo could potentially cripple the Hardby Marines' fleet and any other Greyhavian merchant vessels using the port. How the Marines and Directing Oligarchy are likely to respond to such an act of defiance is unclear—but decisive action of some form is likely.

The Bonded Barrel Ghetto: This warren of warehouses in the center of Fish Town has been derelict for almost a decade, since its owners went bankrupt. The warehouses have become a ghetto, populated by many of Hardby's poor who cram themselves into tiny huts and shanties. These hovels are often stacked precariously on top of each other, forming a teeming indoor slum riddled with narrow, twisting crawl spaces and perilous gantries and bridges. Of late the ghetto has been terrorized by a spate of random murders and disappearances. There is widespread suspicion that the Trade Council is trying to clear the ghetto by terrorizing the squatters into leaving. Other tales speak of a huge bat-like creature that stalks the ghetto, leaving death in its wake.

DM's Notes: The murders are actually the work of **Diran Conoriel** (NE male human Rog5/Asn3), an agent of the Scarlet Brotherhood. He poses as a mad beggar with a pet rat, from which he derives his nickname—"Ratter." The insanity is not entirely part of the disguise. Trained as a Brotherhood assassin, Diran's homicidal urges have gotten the better of him, and despite stern warnings from his masters, he has resumed his murderous ways. Unbeknownst to Diran however, the Scarlet Brotherhood has dispatched a second agent, **Jerda Borav** (LE female human Mnk5), to liquidate him. Jerda hopes to do this in such a fashion as to reveal Diran as an agent of the Brotherhood and manufacture links between him and a key figure in the government of Hardby opposed to the Brotherhood's goals in an effort to engineer the enemy's downfall.

Taremann Norne Warehouses: Taremann Norne (NE male human Rog6) is a one of the wealthier men in Hardby, owning a number of large warehouses in Fishtown. Fabulously greedy and none too wise, his business and his wealth depend on being able to charge high fees for the use of his warehouses. Since the slump in trade after the Greyhawk Wars has meant that there is more warehousing than cargo, Norne has felt the pinch. He has unsuccessfully lobbied (bribed) the Trade Council to allow the conversion of some of the excess warehouses into houses or shops. Recently, he has employed a number of locals of questionable character to act as night watchmen in his premises, and there is speculation that Norne is engaging in some illicit sidelines to bolster his fortunes.

DM's Notes: Norne is indeed engaging in illicit activities, although not of the sort many suspect. His plan is far more ambitious, if typically foolhardy. Norne hopes use his new "friends" to set fires in a number of disused warehouses, including the Bonded Barrel Ghetto, in the hope that the resulting inferno destroys enough of Hardby's warehouse space to allow him to charge any price he likes. He plans to destroy some of his own less valuable premises to deflect suspicion. The fact that the fire could spread out of control and devastate the entire old town, killing many hundreds of people, especially the poor squatters and slum dwellers of Fish Town, has not even occurred to Norne. Even if it did, it would not trouble him, provided he made a profit in the end.

Tradetown

Tradetown is the center of commerce in Hardby. Lying outside the Great Wall, the quarter is crowded with all manner of merchants' and artisans' premises. The merchants occupy Blanket Street, while the artisans cluster by profession in the side alleys. This is a busy and bustling district with a wide variety of goods for sale, including exotic items from the four corners of the Flanaess.

Blanket Street Market: Blanket Street is the heart of Tradetown. The facades of the myriad shops and emporia that line the street form a pair of continuous arcades along its entire length. Under the shelter of these loggias, itinerant traders are allowed to peddle their wares on brightly colored blankets, from which the street derives its name. On any given day, the street is packed and competition between the peddlers for the best places can be fierce. The crowds suit the local thieves, who throng the area, preying on the incautious and the gullible. One of the shops along Blanket Street is owned by **Roban Lannerel** (NE female human Clr7—Earth Dragon), a dealer in gems, jewelry, and obscure *objets d'art*. A wealthy woman, she is known to sponsor expeditions into the Cairn Hills, Abbor-Alz, and Suss Forests to recover unusual items.

DM's Notes: The Trade Council levies a tax on 10% on all goods sold by foreign traders within the city, to encourage

The Dock District

traders to settle in Hardby and give the local merchants an edge over outsiders. Roban is an agent of the Slavelords and a priestess of the Earth Dragon (LE demigod of earth, weather, and hidden treasures; *Domains:* earth, evil). In 592 CY, she married one of the merchants on the Trade Council, giving her access to and influence over Council business. Roban uses her expeditions to dispose of troublesome adventurers who become too interested in the Slavelords, sending them into the wilds and arranging for bandits or humanoids to ensure they do not return. Roban has contacts with Aleeta Norbelos, and is quietly supporting the young gynarch's bid for the *Throne of Wood*.

Office of the Royal Guild of Merchants of Aerdy: In 592 CY, the Royal Guild of Merchants of Aerdy dispatched one of its factors (trade agents), **Mirlan Rinshand** (LN male human Rog10), to Hardby. Rinshand's task is apparently to pave the way for an opening of sea trade between Ahlissa and Hardby. After rapidly snapping up a fine building in the heart of Tradetown, the factor has since distinguished himself as a valued customer to Hardby's better drinking and gambling establishments. The agents that both the Trade Council and Retep Mandel have sent to shadow the Ahlissan have concluded that he is a harmless, if flamboyant, drunken fop.

DM's Notes: Rinshand, though he certainly enjoys the role of the boisterous sot, womanizer, and gambler, is in fact a sharp operator and a rising star in the Royal Guild. Using his carousing as a smokescreen, he works quietly to establish a strong Ahlissan presence in Hardby. Key to this has been forming a pact with the Merchant's Alliance. Using the promise of contracts with the Royal Guild, the Ahlissan lured the Alliance into the guild's embrace and gained the trust of their leader, Perav Hulvir. Rinshand is now subtly manipulating Hulvir, and through him the Merchants' Alliance, stoking discontent with Greyhawk through tales of the almost unimaginable wealth and power that merchants enjoy in Ahlissa.

The Phoenix: Standing on the southern edge of Tradetown, this tavern is among the most recent and most popular in the district. Over its doors is inscribed the motto: "*Here are your waters and your watering place. Drink and be whole, beyond all confusion.*" Certainly the many patrons of the Phoenix can attest to the relaxing atmosphere of the inn. The staff is friendly, the ale refreshing and calming, and the banter humorous and good-natured. Brawls and arguments are unheard of. Quite how the barkeep, an Onnwalon exile named **Pirraen Vhar** (NG female human Sor5) manages this small miracle in a city renowned for its bar-room brawls is unknown, though many suspect that Vhar is some form of enchantress.

DM's Notes: Vhar specializes in enchantments and mind-effecting magic. She rarely puts these to use, however, except to diffuse potential trouble between her customers. The quality of the ale she brews is a testament to

her skills a brewer, herbalist, and cellar-keeper. A native of Onnwal's Storm Coast, Vhar arrived in Hardby in 586 CY, and set up the Phoenix soon after. As the name of the tavern suggests, she supports the resurgent Free State of Onnwal in its war against the Scarlet Brotherhood. She is reluctant to speak of her experiences during the Brotherhood occupation, however, and actively, if discretely, avoids other Onnwalon exiles and travelers.

The Ebbfields

This district was originally the province of Hardby's moneyed classes, who built walled estates and villas outside the Great Wall to escape the crowding and stench of the Old Town. Later, as the population of the city grew, middle-ranking artisans and craftsmen spilled into the Ebbfields, building their half-timbered houses to the east of the old stone-built villas. In recent years, pressure for living space inside the Great Wall has been so great that even the poorest laborers have been forced out into ramshackle cottages and huts on the eastern verges of town. The older parts of the Ebbfields are very pleasant with broad, well-paved, leafy streets and even the more down-at-heel parts nowhere approach the squalor of similar districts in Greyhawk City.

Mistress of the Coach Inn: The Mistress of the Coach is widely considered the best inn in the Ebbfields, if not in the entire city. It caters to an exclusive clientele—high-ranking local officials, members of the Gynarchy, military officers, and wealthy priests, merchants, and adventurers. Set around four sides of a courtyard, the building was once the townhouse of a rich merchant, and it retains much of its original extravagant ornamentation. The Mistress is very expensive, and formal dress is a prerequisite for entry. However, the rooms are extremely luxurious, the food sumptuous and exotic, and the wine cellar without compare in the city.

DM's Notes: The Mistress of the Coach is the place to see and be seen among the movers and shakers of Hardby. Rumors and whispers about the political maneuverings of the various factions in the city can be heard in the private snugs and withdrawing rooms of the inn. The formal dress code is enforced by a half-dozen human ex-mercenaries, and functional armor and weapons are strictly forbidden. Mirlan Rinshand, who keeps a suite of rooms here, is a regular feature in the gambling salon.

Berei's Bounty: In contrast to the ostentation of the Mistress of the Coach, Berei's Bounty is a plain, sturdy, low-priced inn in the east of the Ebbfields. Berei's Bounty welcomes all comers, even those with no money to pay for rooms, who may spend the night on the hard-packed earthen floor of the common room. The inn is exceptionally welcoming and homey thanks to the efforts of the proprietor, **Shilauna Merylann** (NG female human Clr6—Berei), a priestess of Berei. At her direction, the walls of the common room are decked with sheaves of freshly cut wheat every autumn, while a shrine to the Hearth Mother stands above the ornately carved granite mantel of the inn's fireplace.

DM's Notes: The welcoming atmosphere and inexpensive prices make Berei's Bounty a popular inn with adventurers. Tales and rumors of events and strange goings on from the Gnarley, Cairn Hills, Abbor-Alz, and the Bright Lands are common currency here.

Order of the Throne of Wood Chapterhouse: This well-appointed walled estate sprawls in the shadow of the Great Wall. The Order of the Throne of Wood is a female-only society dedicated to furthering the cause of womankind in the Flanaess as a whole and Hardby in particular. Founded early in Hardby's history, the Order was originally called the *Yevas Yal'Akoshen* (Ancient Suloise: "Order of True Womanhood"). The current, less politically provocative name was adopted after the Merchants' Coup. The Order counts most, if not all, of the Gynarchy among its members, as well as many of Hardby's female judges, clergy, mages, and warriors. The Order has a fairly loose and informal structure, though members are bound to render what aid they can to other members and to strive for the rights of the "superior sex." Nominally devoted to Ehlonna, the Order also includes many followers of Wee Jas (especially among magically inclined members) and Mayaheine.

DM's Notes: Membership is by invitation only, but is not restricted to natives of Hardby. Any woman whose actions are deemed to further the cause of womankind may be asked to join. The power struggle in the Gynarchy is reflected in the Order. The Ehlonnan faction, previously pre-eminent, has been in decline since the defection of its leader, Deirdre Longland, to the group devoted to Mayaheine. Under her leadership, the Shield Maidens have gone from strength to strength. Meanwhile, the Coven of the Stern Lady—followers of Wee Jas—has lent their support to Aleeta Norbelos. The first political skirmishes of the battle to succeed Despotrix Ilena are already being fought within the walls of the Order's Chapterhouse.

Redoubt of the Shield Maiden: After her conversion during the Greyhawk Wars, Deirdre Longland donated a townhouse belonging to her family to the Shield Maiden. A small chapel was quickly consecrated on the grounds. However, the rapid burgeoning of the faith in Hardby and generous donations from the Gynarchs have allowed the clergy to lay plans for a grand cathedral to Mayaheine on the site, set to rival the High Chapel in its grandeur. Construction has already begun, but is likely to take many years to complete.

DM's Notes: Work on the cathedral continues apace, though it has recently been hit by a spate of accidents and mishaps. Stone blocks have mysteriously slipped their harnesses and crushed several workmen. The granite blocks hewn and hauled from the Abbor-Alz have proven brittle and apt to shatter and crumble under the hands of the masons. Rumors are beginning to circulate that the cathedral, or the ground upon which it stands, is cursed, and only the forceful character of **Kateranna Yoreill** (LG female human Clr6—Mayaheine), the high-priestess of Mayaheine, has prevented several master masons from abandoning the site altogether. Kateranna knows that unless the cause of the trouble is found soon, her grand project is doomed to failure.

"Temple of Zodal": Though adorned with a crude symbol of the god of mercy, hope, and benevolence, this now derelict building is not actually consecrated to Zodal. The woman who dwelt here posed as a priest of the Gray Son, dispensing healing and herbal salves and remedies. In the spring of 593 CY, one of her concoctions led to the poisoning of several members of a local family. The woman, **Ezoela** (CG female human Com4) (or "Zoe," as she was more commonly known), fled her house before a mob of angry locals ransacked the place. Rumors are rife that Ezoela is an agent of the Scarlet Brotherhood or a cultist of Incabulos, Syrul, or some other evil deity. A price of 100 gp has been placed on her head.

DM's Note: Despite the wild tales, the unfortunate Ezoela is not a cultist or an assassin. She practiced her quackery with good intentions, trying to help the local people and make a living at the same time. Unfortunately, her knowledge of herbs did not match her skill at deception, and she accidentally added hemlock to an herbal remedy, resulting in the poisonings. Ezoela fled for her life and is currently hiding in the Bonded Barrel Ghetto, trying to devise a way to flee the city altogether and start afresh elsewhere.

Hardby's Hinterland

While endless plots abound in the City of the Scorned, adventure aplenty awaits brave explorers within hours of the city gates.

Despotrix's Estate: Despotrix Ilena's private manor lies in the midst of the rolling countryside northeast of Hardby. It is here that the real policies of the Gynarchy are decided. As she has grown frailer in recent years, the despotrix has spent more time cloistered in her manor house. She now leaves only to attend assemblies of the Gynarchy in Hardby or to stir up trouble at the annual meeting of the Greyhawk Council of Mayors and Manorial Lords. Increasingly, her didatrix, **Javka Gerneskir** (NG female human, Rog3/Clr3—Lirr), deals with the despotrix's public business and appointments.

DM's Notes: Ilena knows she is dying, but foresees the damage that the struggle for succession will do to the Gynarchy. She favors her granddaughter for her staunchly anti-Greyhawk stance, but feels Aleeta is too young for the role of despotrix. So Ilena is determined to cling to life for a few more years in the hope that Aleeta learns some wisdom in the meantime. To this end, the despotrix has been in secret but frequent communication with Rary the Traitor. Javka, though a loyal servant to her mistress, is unaware of these contacts. For her part, Javka has assumed extraordinary power for a didatrix, effectively becoming the despotrix's proxy in day to day matters. This has earned the young woman no small number of enemies, including Aleeta, who regards Javka as grasping upstart.

Hardfield Manor: Lying a few miles north of the city, this country estate has been in the hands of the Norbelos Family since they bought it from its previous master, one Zagig Yragerne. It is widely whispered that some of the eccentricity of the Yragerne line somehow took hold of the new occupants. The gynarchs of Hardfield have been without exception reclusive, showing no interest in the politics of the city and only rarely deigning to leave their retreat to attend assemblies of the Gynarchy. The current Lady of Hardfield is **Bridara Norbelos** (N female human Wiz9), the oldest living gynarch.

DM's Notes: Given her age, Bridara has been suggested as a compromise candidate for the *Throne of Wood* when Despotrix Ilena finally dies. So far, however, she has refused to meet with the messengers sent to her by the other gynarchs. In the spring, she sent her didatrix to the Palace in her stead to state that she had no intention of ascending to the *Throne of Wood*. As the struggle between Deirdre and Aleeta grows more polarized, however, the pressure on Bridara to emerge from her seclusion and prevent a schism in the Gynarchy only increases.

Orz: This small fishing village of 300 souls lies several leagues east of Hardby on the Storm Keep road. It was founded in 542 CY by a Naelax prince and his children, who arrived in Hardby from Ahlissa. Renouncing all titles in their homeland, they renamed themselves the House of Orz (the Old Oeridian word for "humble"), and set about building a new life and a new town. Since then, Orz has grown into a prosperous fishing village. The settlement is noteworthy for two things—the ingenious Orz Fishing Crossbow that the fishermen of the village use (see sidebar), and the Orz Auroras, apparently harmless and non-magical lights that appear in the skies over the town at least once a week.

DM's Notes: Shalmarra, the current Lady of Orz (LN female human Ari5), is determined to bury the reason her grandfather, Prince Ivendrenn Naelax, fled his ancestral lands near Benkend. Mirlan Rinshand's curiosity has been piqued by her obviously Ahlissan heritage, however, and the factor has begun quietly digging about in the House of Orz's past in the hope of finding something profitable, either financially or politically.

Arok's Landing: Founded by Arok the Foamborne, a follower of Osprem who was washed ashore here by a freak storm, this village boasts three tanneries and a large shipyard, which builds both warships and merchantmen. In the past two years, Arok's Landing has become something of a boom-town, with artisans and craftsmen flocking here, nearly doubling the population to nigh 600. The village mayor is **Nawenda Foamborne** (CN female human Clr6—Procan), a boisterous and tempestuous priestess notorious for "blessing" every new ship built in the town by sleeping with her lover aboard it before it is launched.

DM's Notes: The real power in Arok's Landing is the Shipwright's Guild, and by extension, the Merchants' Alliance. The Alliance has begun to move its operations here, out from under the watchful eyes of the Hardby garrison and its spies. Perav Hulvir hopes that by concentrating all of Hardby's essential industry in a village utterly loyal to the Alliance, he will soon be able dictate terms to the Military Governor and the Gynarchy. Moreover, he has quietly begun training a Guild Militia to protect the shipyards from orcish marauders, or so he says. In fact, they are the seed of what Hulvir sees as a private army.

Megas Landing: This tiny fishing village of 180 residents lies about four leagues southeast of Hardby. At first glance, it is entirely unremarkable. However, anyone lingering in the place begins to notice something odd. The village and its houses are immaculately maintained, without a slate out of place, while the natives seem to be remarkably organized and close knit. The fishing boats all set off and return at the same time. People rise and retire to bed precisely at dawn and dusk. Although the village seems strange, its orderly nature has attracted a number of new inhabitants to Megas Landing. Most were passing through, but then decided they liked the way of life so much they settled here permanently, slotting effortlessly into the community.

DM's Notes: In spring 591 CY, a wooden box full of strange carved jade insects washed up close to the village. What the villagers thought was a fortune in gems is in fact a nest of overseers, mind-controlling insects created by the Scarlet Brotherhood, disguised as precious stones (see the *Living Greyhawk Journal* in *Dungeon* #106 for more about overseers). The overseers quickly began to take control of the villagers, but as more and more people came under their influence, the creatures began to form an independent Hive Mind. The Hive is no longer under the control of the Scarlet Sign, as the Scarlet Brotherhood agent dispatched to retrieve the overseers discovered when he fell victim to its mental control. The Hive is content to control Megas Landing for now, absorbing only those strangers who begin asking too many questions, but it is only a matter of time before it begins expanding its reach.

Orz Fishing Crossbow: Ranged exotic weapon; Cost 75 gp; Damage 1d8/19–20/x2; Range increment 80 ft./40 ft. underwater; Weight 20 lb. Piercing.

This modified light crossbow can fire a barbed bolt in the air and underwater. If the barbed bolt strikes a fleshy target, a DC 10 Heal check is required to remove it without inflicting a further 1d4 damage. A thin fishing line can be tied to the bolt, which, if yanked out of a victim, inflicts a further 1d4 points of damage.

Minaryn Castle: Some miles out in the Hardby countryside sits the imposing Minaryn Castle, home to **Messalina** (LN female human Wiz15), a Throne Knight who serves as magical advisor to Despotrix Ilena. The dark-haired, attractive woman trained at Greyhawk's University of Magical Arts, but soon fell out of favor with that august body after a particularly heated philosophical argument with its principal, Kieren Jalucian, forced her to relocate to her family's ancestral castle outside Hardby.

Unpopular with the Gynarchs, Messalina spends most of her days ensconced in her demesne, communicating with Ilena via messenger or magical means in an attempt to keep her influence secret from the prying eyes of Hardby's numerous factions. The despotrix considers Messalina's expertise superior to her own on matters arcane, and defaults to her advisor's position on a number of important magical issues.

Messalina frequently hires adventurers on missions of diplomacy and exploration into the foreboding wastes of the Bright Desert, an area with which the wizard enjoys great familiarity.

DM's Notes: Despite her heartfelt devotion to Despotrix Ilena, Messalina is first and foremost a servant of Rary the Traitor, with whom she adventured during her time the city of Greyhawk 20 years ago. Rary not only saved her life on numerous occasions, but also instructed her on the intricacies of countless magical secrets. Rumors of Rary's recent trafficking with fiends fill her with apprehension, but she fondly remembers the peerlessly intelligent, soft-spoken archmage of years gone by and assumes that his activities in the Bright Desert will come to an altruistic end.

At Rary's behest, Messalina has taken Aleeta Norbelos as her magical pupil, hoping to craft the impulsive youth into a malleable future leader of Hardby who eventually will be used by Rary as a weapon against his numerous enemies in Greyhawk.

Personalities of Hardby

People form the heart of Hardby's politics, problems, and perils. The following five NPCs are important to campaigns set in the City of the Scorned.

Ilena Norbelos, Despotrix of Hardby, Female Human Wiz13: CR 13; Medium humanoid (human); HD 13d4–12; hp 24; Init +0; Spd 30 ft.; AC 17, touch 13, flat-footed 17; Base Atk +6; Grp +4; Atk +4 melee (1d6–2, quarterstaff); Full Atk +4/–1 melee (1d6–2, quarterstaff); SA spells; SQ raven familiar; AL NG; SV Fort +3, Ref +4, Will +9; Str 6, Dex 10, Con 9, Int 19, Wis 13, Cha 16.

Skills: Appraise +7, Bluff +14, Concentration +15, Diplomacy +16, Disguise +6 (+8 acting), Gather Information +13, Intimidate +8, Knowledge (arcana) +12, Knowledge (local) +12, Sense Motive +11, Spellcraft +22.

Feats: Brew Potion, Craft Wondrous Item, Forge Ring, Leadership, Maximize Spell, Negotiator, Scribe Scroll, Silent Spell, Spell Focus (divination).

Languages: Common, Aquan, Draconic, Elven.

Spells Prepared (4/5/5/5/5/3/2/1; save DC 14 + spell level); 0—*daze, detect magic*, light, read magic*; 1st—*burning hands, charm person, color spray, magic missile, sleep*; 2nd—*bear's endurance, bull's strength, detect thoughts*, invisibility, protection from arrows*; 3rd—*blink, dispel magic, hold person, lightning bolt, magic circle against evil*; 4th—*detect scrying*, Evard's black tentacles, magic missile* (maximized), *polymorph, scrying**; 5th—*dimension door* (silent), *teleport, wall of force*; 6th—*chain lightning, lightning bolt* (maximized); 7th—*prismatic spray*.

*Divination Spell: These spells have a save DC 15 + spell level.

Possessions: Bracers of armor +4, circlet of persuasion, ring of protection +3.

The white-haired Despotrix of Hardby is frail beyond her 64 years. Though her vivid blue eyes have lost none of their piercing intelligence, her already spare frame has grown noticeably thinner in the last several years. While in private she is often too weak to walk, Ilena fortifies herself with magic for public engagements, which she carries off with all of her considerable poise and charm. The strain of these appearances often leaves the despotrix bedridden for weeks afterward, however, and they have become increasingly rare.

Although her strength has ebbed away ever since her participation in the Striking of the *Crook of Rao* (at the urging of the archmage Tenser), Ilena's mind remains as sharp as ever. She has a prodigious memory as well as a wicked, sardonic wit that belies her outwardly reserved demeanor. Ilena commands considerable respect both from the people of Hardby (with the exception of the leaders of the Merchants' Alliance) and from the rulers of neighboring realms. Like her granddaughter, Ilena hates Greyhawk's Directing Oligarchy for enslaving her city, and she uses her position on the Greyhawk Council of Mayors and Manorial Lords to unite the lords of Greyhawk's outlying fiefs against the Oligarchs. Though once little in Hardby escaped her attention, the despotrix knows nothing of the dangerous alliances Aleeta has formed, and would be profoundly shocked if she did.

Javka Gerneskir, Didatrix to Despotrix Ilena, Female Human Clr3—Lirr/Rog3: CR 6; Medium humanoid (human); HD 3d8+3d6+12; hp 41; Init +2; Spd 30 ft.; AC 12, touch 12, flat-footed 10; Base Atk +4; Grp +6; Atk/Full Atk +7 melee (1d6+2/18–20, masterwork rapier); SA sneak attack +2d6, spells, turn undead; SQ evasion, trapfinding, trap sense +1; AL NG; SV Fort +6, Ref +6, Will +5; Str 14, Dex 15, Con 14, Int 13, Wis 12, Cha 13.

Skills: Climb +5, Concentration +8, Diplomacy +7, Escape Artist +9, Forgery +7, Gather Information +3, Hide +5, Knowledge (local) +7, Listen +4, Move Silently +5, Open Lock +9, Sleight of Hand +5, Spot +4, Use Magic Device +7.

Feats: Endurance, Run, Skill Focus (Forgery), Two-Weapon Fighting.

Languages: Common, Gnome.

Spells Prepared (4/2+1/1+1; save DC 10 + spell level); 0—*cure minor wounds* (2), *detect poison, mending*; 1st—*command* (2), *longstrider**; 2nd—*locate object *, silence*.

*Domain Spell. *Domains:* Magic (use magic items as a 1st-level wizard), Travel (*freedom of movement* up to 3 rounds/day; Survival is a class skill).

Possessions: Masterwork rapier, *vest of escape*.

A short, solidly built woman of 27 years, Javka has dark, wavy hair, olive skin, and brilliant blue eyes. As the despotrix's strength has waned, Javka's power has waxed. She controls access to Ilena and deals with more and more of her mistress' business in an effort to preserve the despotrix's failing strength. Although she realizes that she is the power behind the *Throne of Wood*, Javka has no personal ambitions to occupy that seat, considering herself merely a servant of the despotrix. That said, her own judgment rather than Ilena's has increasingly guided her actions.

Javka has a very strong sense of duty and lives to serve the despotrix and the Gynarchy. She is an able administrator, capable of flexible and imaginative solutions to problems. In her private moments, she composes fine sonnets and is well disposed toward fellow poets. Though she shares many of her mistress' views, Javka is unaware of Ilena's magical communications with Rary, being instead an ally of the archmage Tenser, passing on news about the Bright Lands to him. Javka's power has won her many enemies in Hardby. Though Javka respects Ilena's wishes with regard to the succession, the didatrix has no love for Aleeta. Javka's determination to follow her mistress' wishes means that Deirdre Longland hasn't gained any favors either. As a result, Javka finds herself resented by both main contenders for the *Throne of Wood*, a situation she accepts as a consequence of her loyalty to her mistress.

Aleeta Norbelos, Gynarch of Hardby, Female Human, Wiz7: CR 7; Medium humanoid (human); HD 7d4; hp 21; Init +1; Spd 30 ft.; AC 11, touch 11, flat-footed 10; Base Atk +3; Grp +1; Atk/Full Atk +1 melee (1d4–2/19–20, dagger); SA spells; SQ cat familiar; AL NE; SV Fort +2, Ref +3, Will +5; Str 7, Dex 12, Con 10, Int 17, Wis 10, Cha 16.

Skills: Bluff +8, Concentration +10, Diplomacy +10, Disguise +3 (+5 acting), Gather Information +5, Intimidate +5, Knowledge (local) +13, Move Silently +4, Sense Motive +5, Spellcraft +13.

Feats: Brew Potion, Leadership, Scribe Scroll, Silent Spell, Spell Focus (enchantment), Still Spell.

Languages: Common, Elven, Giant, Infernal.

Spells Prepared (4/5/4/3/1; save DC 13 + spell level); 0—*daze, detect magic, light, read magic;* 1st—*alter self, charm person, expeditious retreat, magic missile, sleep;* 2nd—*detect thoughts, invisibility, levitate, protection from arrows;* 3rd—*charm person* (still and silent), *dispel magic, lightning bolt;* 4th—*scrying.*

*Enchantment spell; save DC 14 + spell level.

Possessions: Brooch of shielding (can absorb 39 points of *magic missile* damage), *ring of mind shielding.*

Aleeta is a slender, attractive woman of 24 summers who, with her long, straight black hair and piercing blue eyes, is said to bear striking resemblance to her grandmother in her youth. The resemblance goes far deeper than just looks. Like Ilena, Aleeta combines keen intelligence with magnetic charm. The gynarch's love for Hardby has fostered a fierce hatred of Greyhawk. Unlike Ilena however, Aleeta does not have the wisdom of age to temper her passion. For Aleeta, Greyhawk embodies all the violent, coercive, masculine qualities that the Gynarchy was founded to oppose. Its usurpation of power violated Hardby and shamed the Gynarchy. She is determined to inflict the same humiliation on the Gem of the Flanaess and dreams of dealing with those that have "raped" her city in the traditional manner, starting with the Directing Oligarchy.

Driven by ambition, she became a judge of the Law Courts at the age of 20. Ambition too led her to ally with the Slavelords of the Pomarj. In return for spying on the movements of the Hardby Marines, Aleeta has secured the clandestine aid of the Slavers in her bid for the *Throne of Wood*. Though she does not support slavery, she considers the Slavelords friends because they are enemies of Greyhawk. Aleeta despises Deirdre Longland for her willingness to cooperate with the "occupiers," especially Wilbrem Carister, whom she hates almost as much as Greyhawk's Mayor Nerof Gasgal.

Deirdre Longland, Gynarch and Justicar of Hardby, Female Human, Ftr8/Cav4: CR 12; Medium humanoid (human); HD 12d10+24; hp 100; Init +2; Spd 20 ft.; AC 22, touch 12, flat-footed 20; Base Atk +12; Grp +16; Atk +20 melee (1d10+8/19–20, +2 *bastard sword*) or +18 melee (1d8+5/×3, +1 *lance*); Full Atk +20/+15/+10 melee (1d10+8/19–20, +2 *bastard sword*) or +18/+13/+8 melee (1d8+5/×3, +1 *lance*); SA deadly charge 2/day, mounted weapon bonus (lance and sword +1); SQ burst of speed, courtly knowledge, Ride bonus +4, *special mount*; AL LG; SV Fort +12, Ref +5, Will +8; Str 18, Dex 14, Con 14, Int 12, Wis 14, Cha 10.

Courtly Knowledge (Ex): Deirdre gains a +4 competence bonus on Knowledge (nobility and royalty) checks.

Deadly Charge (Ex): When mounted and using the charge action, Deirdre deals triple damage with a melee weapon or quadruple damage with a lance. A deadly charge must be declared before making an attack roll. This ability does not stack with the benefit of the Spirited Charge feat.

Mounted Weapon Bonus (Ex): Deirdre gains a +1 competence bonus on attack rolls made using a lance or sword while mounted.

Burst of Speed (Ex): Deirdre can urge her mount to greater than normal speed when charging. This ability doubles the maximum distance the mount can travel when making a charge, up to four times its speed. This ability can be used once per day without penalty to the mount. Each additional use of the ability in a single day requires the mount to make a DC 20 Will save immediately after the conclusion of the charge; failure results in the mount taking 2d6 points of damage.

Skills: Diplomacy +2, Handle Animal +17, Jump +11, Knowledge (nobility and royalty) +13, Ride +25, Swim –1.

Feats: Animal Affinity, Exotic Weapon Proficiency (bastard sword), Greater Weapon Focus (bastard sword), Leadership, Mounted Combat, Ride-By Attack, Spirited Charge, Trample, Weapon Focus (lance), Weapon Focus (bastard sword), Weapon Specialization (bastard sword).

Languages: Common, Auran.

Possessions: Yevaran (+2 *orc bane bastard sword*), +1 *lance,* +2 *breastplate,* +1 *mithral arrow catching heavy shield.*

A muscular, heavily-built woman of 34, Deirdre's freckled, tanned complexion and sun-bleached light brown hair speak of an active outdoor life. There is a steely hardness in her green eyes, the legacy of the grim sights they have seen on many a battlefield.

In her younger days, Deirdre and her mage brother Oscar gained notoriety for slaying the Szek of Safeton in revenge for his abduction and murder of their grandmother. Deirdre was elevated to the Gynarchy and appointed Justicar in 581 CY for her role in defeating a Pomarji host in the Welkwood. She and Oscar fought at the Siege of Safeton during the Greyhawk Wars, during which Oscar was maimed and blinded. Once a worshiper of Ehlonna, the refusal of Celene to take up arms against Turrosh Mak led to Deirdre's conver-

sion to Mayaheine's nascent cult. Since then she has been a passionate champion of the Shield Maiden's church and of the need to stand united against the hordes of the Pomarj and the Bright Lands, even at the cost of surrendering sovereignty to Greyhawk.

Outspoken and forceful, Deirdre is an able commander on the field of battle. However, these same qualities make her ill-suited to the more subtle cut and thrust of the political arena. Nonetheless, Deirdre has gained a large measure of support from the Church of Mayaheine and the more militant Gynarchs by evoking the memory of Jik Jonnosh, the great warrior despotrix of old. Deirdre bears the blade *Yevaran* (Ancient Suloise: Law's Wrath), forged by Oscar after the Wars as his vengeance on the orcs of the Pomarj.

Wilbrem Carister, Military Governor and Captain of the Hardby Marines, male human, Ftr9: CR 9; Medium humanoid (human); HD 9d10+27; hp 85; Init +3; Spd 30 ft.; AC 19, touch 13, flat-footed 16; Base Atk +9; Grp +14; Atk +17 melee (1d10+8/17–20, *+1 bastard sword*); Full Atk +17/+12 melee (1d10+8/17–20, *+1 bastard sword*); SA —; SQ —; AL LN; SV Fort +9, Ref +6, Will +2; Str 21, Dex 16, Con 17, Int 15, Wis 9, Cha 15.

Skills: Climb +17, Jump +17, Profession (sailor) +11, Swim +17, Use Magic Device +11.

Feats: Cleave, Exotic Weapon Proficiency (bastard sword), Greater Weapon Focus (bastard sword), Improved Critical (bastard sword), Improved Bull Rush, Leadership, Power Attack, Skill Focus (Use Magic Device), Weapon Focus (bastard sword), Weapon Specialization (bastard sword).

Languages: Common, Aquan, Elven

Possessions: +1 bastard sword, +2 leather armor, heavy steel shield, *gauntlets of ogre power, wand of magic missile* (32 charges, caster level 5), *wand of cure light wounds* (18 charges).

Wilbrem Carister cuts a striking figure: barrel chested, heavily tattooed, and completely bald, with a long gray beard and a wicked, gap-toothed grin. Now nearly 53, he is beginning to feel the encroachment of age—but is fiercely determined to see it off just as he has all his other foes.

A marine since he was old enough to grow whiskers, Wilbrem boasts about having visited every port in the Flanaess, and his broad knowledge of foreign parts seems to support this. An open, honest man at heart, he hated the mendacious politics of the old Trade Council, and feels no guilt for betraying his former colleagues. A stern, gruff but generous commander, he is loved by his men, whom he leads with almost reckless abandon. Wilbrem relishes orcslaying far more than the exercise of power. He despises Retep Mandel, but so long as the "viperous little sneak" doesn't interfere with military matters or get designs above his station, Wilbrem is content to put up with him. Carister also has considerable respect for Deirdre Longland, but otherwise has proved impervious to the subtle wiles of the Gynarchy, preferring a succession of cheerful bawdy-house wenches to the stern and manipulative matrons of Hardby. Wilbrem is never without his pet parrot, named either Albrecht or Erule, depending on Carister's whim. The bird is in fact a *baleful polymorphed* fomorian giant with the mind of a parrot but a distinctly unparrotly fondness for raw steak.

Retep Mandel, Chief Secretary to the Military Governor, male human, Rog5/Asn4: CR 9; Medium humanoid (human); HD 9d6+9; hp 47; Init +4; Spd 30 ft.; AC 17, touch 14, flat-footed 13; Base Atk +7; Grp +8; Atk +13 melee (1d4+2/19–20, *+1 returning dagger*) or +13 ranged (1d4+2/19–20, *+1 returning dagger*); Full Atk +13/+8 melee (1d4+2/19–20, *+1 returning dagger*) or +13/+8 ranged (1d4+2/19–20, *+1 returning daggers*); SA death attack, sneak attack 5d6, spells; SQ evasion, poison use, trapfinding, trap sense +1, improved uncanny dodge; AL LE; SV Fort +3 (+5 against poison), Ref +12, Will +2; Str 12, Dex 18, Con 12, Int 16, Wis 10, Cha 14.

Skills: Balance +6, Bluff +14, Decipher Script +11, Diplomacy +12, Disguise +14 (+16 acting), Escape Artist +16, Forgery +11, Hide +16, Intimidate +16, Jump +3, Move Silently +16, Profession (apothecary) +3, Tumble +16, Sense Motive +5, Spot +12, Use Rope +4 (+6 bindings).

Feats: Combat Expertise, Improved Feint, Quickdraw, Weapon Finesse, Weapon Focus (dagger).

Languages: Common, Aquan, Goblin, Halfling.

Spells Known (4/2; save DC 13 + spell level): 1st—*disguise self, detect poison, sleep, true strike;* 2nd—*cat's grace, invisibility, undetectable alignment.*

Possessions: Two *+1 returning daggers* (named "Panic" and "Terror"), studded leather armor, 4 doses giant wasp poison.

Retep Mandel is a short, narrow-faced man of 34. While in public he takes great pains to appear as a nondescript scribe, in private his unnerving stillness and cold, black eyes leave no doubt that he is a powerful and dangerous man. More than one person has observed that there is something of the night about him, but always in whispers well out of his earshot.

A member of Greyhawk Assassin's Guild, Retep's total loyalty to Greyhawk was rewarded when he was dispatched by the oligarchs to root out sedition in Hardby. Retep has taken to the task with relish. A meticulous and calculating man, he is content to wait patiently until his quarry shows a weakness and then strike with lethal speed. Utterly without feeling, passion, or mercy, he kills simply because it is what he is skilled at. Retep is well aware that the gynarchs are plotting against him and he patiently waits for the pretext he needs to arrest the entire Gynarchy for treason. The Merchants' Alliance proved easier to infiltrate, and Retep

knows of Perav Hulvir's plans in Arok's Landing. Mandel is currently giving the guildmaster plenty of rope with which to hang himself. An expert with poisons and sera of all kinds, Retep spends his few private hours experimenting with new combinations of toxins. His prized possessions are his twin daggers, *Panic* and *Terror*.

Mirlan Rinshand, Factor of the Royal Guild of Merchants of Aerdy, male human, Rog10: CR 10; Medium humanoid (human); HD 10d6; hp 44; Init +7; Spd 30 ft.; AC 19, touch 13, flat-footed 16; Base Atk +7; Grp +7; Atk +13 melee (1d6+2/18–20, +2 *rapier*); Full Atk +13/+8 melee (1d6+2/18–20, +2 *rapier*); SA sneak attack +5d6; SQ evasion, improved uncanny dodge, slippery mind, trapfinding, trap sense +3; AL LN; SV Fort +3, Ref +10, Will +5; Str 10, Dex 16, Con 10, Int 16, Wis 14, Cha 18.

Skills: Balance +17, Bluff +16, Decipher Script +15, Diplomacy +20, Disguise +16 (+18 acting), Forgery +15, Gather Information +6, Intimidate +18, Jump +2, Listen +14, Knowledge (local) +15, Tumble +15, Sense Motive +16, Spot +14.

Feats: Combat Expertise, Improved Initiative, Negotiator, Weapon Finesse, Weapon Focus (rapier).

Languages: Common, Elven, Gnome, Halfling.

Possessions: +2 *rapier*, +2 *glamered studded leather armor, amulet of natural armor* +1, five *potions of neutralize poison*.

A portly man of 28, Mirlan Rinshand is of nearly pure Oeridian descent, with a deep olive complexion, fashionably curled black hair, and a mischievous glint in his gray eyes. Handsome and vain, he is always attired in the latest fashions from Ahlissa, which usually involve unending reams of brocade and cloth of gold.

A native of Kalstrand, Mirlan is one of a generation of fiercely ambitious young Ahlissan merchants who see the rise of Overking Xavener as an opportunity to win vast fortunes for themselves. He has been entrusted with the task of wresting Hardby from Greyhawk's grasp and establishing the port as Ahlissa's gateway to the central Flanaess. Though Mirlan certainly enjoys carousing, he never allows it to cloud his judgement and keeps a stock of *potions of neutralize poison* on hand to negate the copious amounts of alcohol he consumes. When in playboy mode, everyone is his "good and dear friend" and there is much slapping of backs, quaffing of wine and flirting with attractive young ladies. Beneath this mask however, burns an intense desire to succeed and serve his homeland, his guild, and his own ambition. Nonetheless, Mirlan is not a totally heartless man, and he takes no pleasure in manipulating his drinking partners. Betrayal for him is never personal, but merely business. Mirlan is aware of Retep Mandel's ties to the Greyhawk Assassin's Guild and is quietly searching for a means to rid himself of Mandel's troublesome presence.

Rumors and Whispers

- Agents of Rary the Traitor are infiltrating the city. Groups of Bakluni have been meeting in dockside taverns and a strange metal horse was seen on the Orz road. (False)

- A band of mercenaries from Dyvers has recently taken up residence in Arok's Landing. While keeping a low profile, they were seen training a group of longshoremen to shoot longbows in a nearby copse early one morning. (True)

- The half-orcs in Hardby are all spies for Turrosh Mak. (False, though Pomarji half-orc spies can use the native population as cover for their activities.)

- A ship with yellow sails was spotted by a Marine patrol near the mouth of the Selintan. It failed to heave to when ordered and vanished in a squall. Have the dreaded Slavelords arisen once more? (True)

- A creature from Rotanna's Menagerie is causing the deaths in Fishtown. Rotanna, who keeps all manner of strange animals in her townhouse in Northend, denies the charge—but nothing is true until it's denied. (False)

- A dwarf claiming to be of the Ironforge Clan of Irongate is recruiting for an expedition to reclaim the lost port of Zarak and the legendary Mines of Azak-Zil. (True and false—the dwarf is recruiting, but is not a member of Clan Ironforge, and is instead trying to steal the Ironforge claim to the haunted mines.)

- Orcish pirates have become more organized in recent months. Some of the Marines say that the orcs have a new leader directing their attacks. (True)

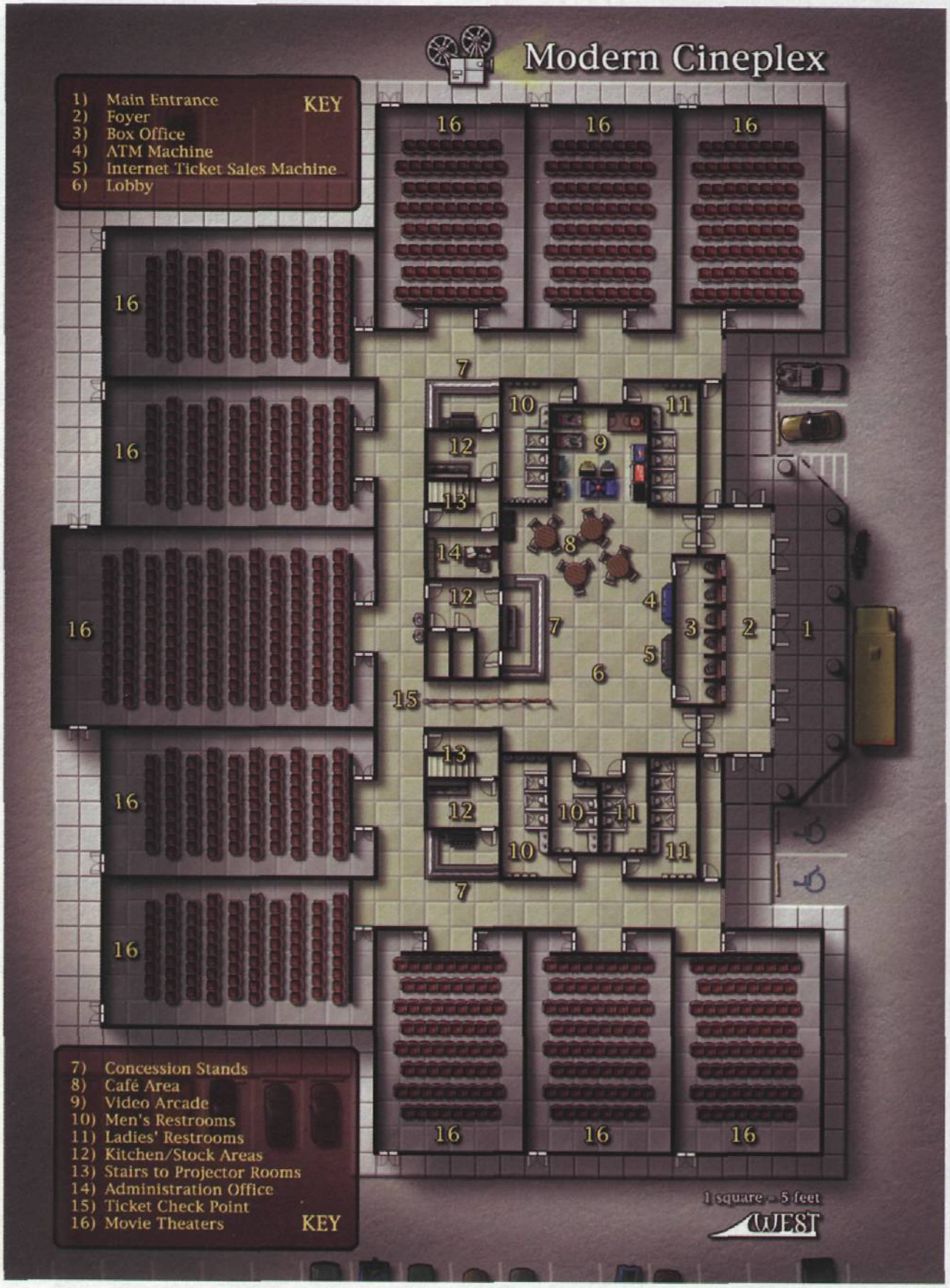
- A shocking change occurred in the Orz Aurora when it last appeared. Large drops of blood rained down on the village for an hour. (True)

- A ghost ship was found adrift in Woolly Bay. The ship was in good order, but its crew appeared to have vanished. Since the ship was towed into port, bizarre deaths and ill-luck have befallen the salvage crew. (True)

- The body of the merchant Marwyrd Relpenn was found washed up near Orz two months ago. So why was Marwyrd seen alive on Blanket Street last week? (True)

DOWNER part ten

Story and art by **Kyle Stanley Hunter.** Lettering by **Sean Glenn.** A **Super Unicorn** production. **www.superunicorn.com**

CHUNRK
DOWNER, THERE ARE TOO MANY OF THEM!
MY ASS! YOU SCUM KNOW WHO I AM! GUILD PRIVILEGE!
FIGHT, OR THERE'S A BOUNTY ON YER HEAD! PICK UP PAY TOMORROW AT THE HALL!
MEANWHILE...
DOWNER IS A PROVEN LOSER, BUT HE'S NO FOOL. HE'S LIKELY TO KEEP A LOW PROFILE.
HE HAS VALUABLE INFORMATION, SO KEEP HIM ALIVE. THE LITTLE SPY THAT'S OUT THERE IS ANOTHER MATTER.
ELIMINATE HIM WITH EXTREME PREDJUDICE.
HE THREATENS TO QUEER THE WHOLE DEAL.
'OLD ON GAJO. YOU'RE JUST ABOUT THE RIGHT SIZE TO GET ME OUT OF THIS PIT.
TO BE CONTINUED

Cartography by Christopher West